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HISTORY OF THE PEACE,
1826—1835.

HISTORY OF THE PEACE:

BEING A

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM

1816 TO 1854.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

1800 TO 1815.

By HARRIET MARTINEAU.

VOL. III.

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HISTORY OF THE PEACE.

B O O K III.

CHAPTER I.

THE period on which we are now entering — the last years of the reign of George IV. — is one of remarkable interest and importance in the retrospect, though the complaint of the time was of stagnation of public business. It is true that, for three sessions, scarcely any thing was done of what is commonly called public business. In regard to variety of subject, the records of Parliament perhaps were never before so meagre for three consecutive sessions. At the same time, the registers of the period are full of ministerial correspondence, ministerial explanations, and ministerial difficulties: for this there was ample reason; and in this lay the deep importance and interest of the period.

It is common for society to complain of loss of the public time, and postponement of public business, when a change of ministry, or other event, induces explanation of their personal conduct on the part of public men. It is common to complain of such explanations, as if statesmen were obtruding their personal concerns upon a public which does not care for them, but wants to be about its own business. But this is, wherever held, a vulgar error, and a most pernicious one. Every true statesman knows that his personal honor is a national interest; and every enlightened citizen knows that the highest distinction of a nation is the rectitude of its rulers; and that no devotion of time, thought, patience, and energy, can be too great for the object of upholding the standard of political honor among statesmen. In the most ordinary times, therefore, the enlightened citizen will eagerly receive, and earnestly weigh, the statements of public men with regard to their official conduct, aware that the postponement of legislative acts is a less evil than that of failing to discharge

every conscience, to decide upon every reputation, as it comes into question, and thus to ascertain that the moral ground is firm and secure before proceeding to political action. If it be thus in ordinary times, much stronger was the obligation to prove the conduct and reputation of statesmen at the period we are now entering upon. If, during the next three years, ministerial difficulties and explanations seem to be endless, there must be some cause; the embarrassment must be, in fact, a characteristic of the time.

We have witnessed the admission into the Cabinet of two men who were called "political adventurers;"¹ and we have recognized in this event the sign that a new time had arrived, requiring for its administration a new order of men. Though the new men had acted and succeeded in their function, the struggles and perplexities of the transition from one state of society and government to another had yet to be gone through; and the beginning of these struggles and perplexities is what we have now to contemplate. We shall see ministry after ministry formed and dissolved. We shall see that the difficulty lay, not in finding competent men,—for able men abounded at that time,—but in determining what great principle, of those afloat, should so preponderate as to determine the government of the country. In the trial of this all-important point, the next three years cannot now be said to have been wasted, though at the time the vexation was severe, of seeing great questions standing still, ordinary legislative business thrust aside, and a temper and language of political bitterness rising up, such as could never have been anticipated among men of rational capacities and gentlemanly education.

The King opened the new Parliament in person on the 21st of November, declaring in his speech that he called the Opening of Parliament. Houses together for the special purpose of declaring and accounting for the measures taken by government in opening the ports to some kinds of grain and pulse, in consequence of the scarcity produced by the drought of the summer. In answer to various complaints in both Houses about the scanty revelations of the speech, Lord Liverpool and Mr. Canning pleaded the special nature of the business which occasioned the present sitting, and promised the regular supply of information and suggestion at the regular time,—after the Christmas recess. Ministers obtained the indemnity they sought for opening the ports during the recess; and, with one exception, little else was done before Christmas.² But that exception was a brilliant and most significant one. Mr. Canning accounted to Parliament, and obtained its enthusiastic sanction, for sending troops to Portugal.

¹ Annual Register, 1865, p. 175.

² Ante, p. 150.

The sanction of Parliament was indeed most enthusiastic ; and so was the response from the country. But it is believed by those who ought to know, that this speech was fatal to Mr. Canning. His earnestness and eloquence were taken by the Tories as a demonstration in favor of liberalism. They well knew that he was in fact, though not in name, the leader of the government. They knew that the Duke of York so clearly considered him so, that he had just made an audacious attempt, by addressing the King, to get him dismissed from the cabinet. They gave all their strength to bear him down, and wrought against him with a new exasperation, from the date of his announcement of his having despatched the troops to Portugal. They could not bear him down in intention and in act. They could not bear him down in the estimation of the country, in which he was indeed rising from day to day. But there was a way in which he was in their power ; they enfeebled his health. They could not bow his noble head, or tame his princely eye, by reproach or threat ; but they could and did, without design or consideration, by the poison of disease. There are few men whose nerves are not more or less in the power of other men's judgments and tempers ; and of those few, Canning was certainly not one. His magnificent organization, adequate to the production of every thing that can ennoble the human being, — absolutely teeming with genius, — had the one imperfection of being too sensitive. This was so clear, — so evident on the merest glance at his face, — that those have much to answer for who failed in the consideration thus bespoken by nature herself. Canning needed no indulgence. In the depth of illness, his high courage would have spurned it. He never deprecated ; never, we may be sure, in the innermost breathings of his soul. He provoked much, dared every thing, and endured till nature broke down. But nature was breaking down all the time that his enemies were most merciless ; and they never saw it. It was visible in the weakening brow, the deepening eye, the quivering lip, the heavy and uncertain step. His enemies did not mark these signs which grieved his friends ; and when, in reply to their rancor, the eye flashed again as it was wont, and the cheek flushed, and the voice rang from the roof, they were sure that they had done him no harm. From the time of his speech on sending aid to Portugal, the contest between Canning and his policy, and his foes and their policy, became deadly. It was indeed death that now interposed, and finally settled the conflict.

The Duke of York was the first who was withdrawn. The Lord Chancellor saw much of him for some weeks before his death ; and the Chancellor's opinion was, that his thoughts were almost exclusively occupied by the Catholic

question, and the dread, in regard to that question, of the ascendancy of Mr. Canning. In Lord Eldon's own opinion, his existence was essential to the effectual counteraction of Mr. Canning's influence, and to his displacement from the councils of the King. "His death," declares Lord Eldon, "must affect every man's political situation, — perhaps nobody's more than my own. It may shorten, it may prolong, my stay in office."¹ Of course, Mr. Canning himself must have known as well as other people the importance of the life that had gone, the significance of the death that had arrived. It must have been with a singular mixture of feelings, that a man of his patriotism and power of will, and of his magnanimity and sensibility, must have bent over the vault in St. George's Chapel, into whose darkness, amidst the blaze of torches, the body of his arch-enemy was descending. It was then and there that he took his own death; perhaps at the moment when he was thinking how quiet is that resting-place at the goal of every human career, where the small and great lie down together, and "princes and counsellors of the earth," like his foe and himself, are quiet, and sleep after their warfare.

If those who attended that funeral could have seen their own position between the past and the future as we see it now, it would have so absorbed all their thoughts, as, that the body might have been lowered into its vault unseen, and the funeral anthems have been unheard. A more singular assemblage than the doomed group about the mouth of that vault has seldom been seen. In virtue of our survivorship, we can observe them now, each one with his fate hovering over his uncovered head. He who was next to be lowered into that vault was not there. He was in his palace, weak in health and spirits, — relieved, and yet perplexed, that the course of government was simplified by the removal of his remonstrant brother, whose plea of nearness to the throne — now so solemnly set aside — had made his interference at once irksome and difficult to disregard. There would be no more interference now; no more painful audiences; no more letters brought in with that familiar superscription. The way was clear now; but to what? Liverpool and Canning must settle that. If they felt that the Catholic question must be settled, they must show how it was to be done; and they must do it. Liverpool and Canning! By that day twelvemonths, how was it with them? Lord Liverpool was not at Windsor that night. He laid down his careworn head to rest, unaware that but a few more days of life — as he considered life — remained to him. The body breathed for some months; but, in a few days after this, the mind was dead. As for Canning, his heart and mind were full, as his noble brow

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 580.

shone in the torchlight. He well knew that it was not only his chief personal enemy who was here laid low, but the only insurmountable barrier to his policy! He saw an open course before him, or one which he himself could clear. He saw the foul fiend Revolution descend into that vault, to be sealed down in it with that coffin. He saw, beyond that torch-lit chapel, a sunny vision of Ireland tranquillized; and the hope rose within him that he might achieve a peace at home — the sound peace of freedom — as blessed as the peace which he had spread over the world abroad. And all the time, the chill and the damps of that chapel, dim amidst the yellow glare, with the night-fog of January, were poisoning his vitals, and shortening his allowance of life to a mere span. Beside him stood his friend and comrade, Huskisson. They were born in the same spring; they were neither of them to know another moment of health after this chilly night-service; and their deaths were to be not far apart. What remained for both was the bitter last drops of the cup of life; sickness, toil, perplexity, some humiliation, and infinite anguish. Here, if they had known their future, they would have laid down all self-regards, all ambition, all hope and mirth, all thoughts of finished work and a serene old age, and have gone forth to do and suffer the last stage of their service, before dropping into their untimely rest. These two had made no professions of grief about the death of the prince: they did not vaunt their feelings; yet here they were, sad and solemn; while beside them stood one whose woes about the loss of his royal friend, and about the irreparable loss to the empire, were paraded before all men's eyes, and dinned into the ears of all who would listen. Here stood Lord Chancellor Eldon, beside the open grave in which he declared that the hopes of his country were being buried. Was he lost in grief? his ready tears in fuller flow than ever? his soul absorbed in patriotic meditation? "Lord Eldon, recollecting" — what? — that he might catch cold, stood upon his hat, to avoid chill from the flags; "and his precaution was completely successful."¹ If it had but occurred to Canning to stand upon his hat! but he was thinking of other things. There were others for whom death was in waiting; and some for whom great labors and deeds were preparing in life. The troublesome opponent of ministers, Mr. Tierney, who was to be found dead in his study before the next royal funeral; and Lord Graves, who was to die by his own hand, under the provocation of royal vice or levity. And what tasks lay before those who were yet to live and work! Among the six dukes who bore the pall, was he who was to succeed to the highest military office now thus vacated; and Wellington

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 583.

himself no doubt thought, this night, that he was of one mind in the great political questions of the day with the prince whose pall he bore. No doubt he believed that he should, in his proper place, do what he could to exclude the Catholics, and to keep the conscience of the sovereign fixed upon the coronation oath, and his duty to Protestantism: in his proper place, we say, because the Duke spurned the idea of a military chief like himself taking civil office, and openly declared, with indignation at an unfounded rumor, that he should be mad if he dreamed of the premiership. Yet, before this royal vault should again be open, Wellington was to be Premier, and use his office to repeal the disabilities of the Catholics. Truly, pledges and prophecies are dangerous things for statesmen to meddle with in times of transition; and it would seem to be a main feature in the mission of the honest and resolute Wellington, — honest and resolute beyond all cavil, — to prove the presumption of pledges and prophecies in times of transition. Then there was Peel, with the same work before him, and much more, of which he had not yet begun to dream; and with the fate before him of losing his best-beloved honor, — the representation of his university, — and gaining several others, any one of which would suffice to make an immortality. And there was Hardinge, the friend of both the deceased and the incoming commander-in-chief, who was to signalize his age in the history of India by his administration, and achievements both of peace and war. And there was, as chief-mourner, he who was to be the next King, and in whose reign was to occur that vital renovation of our representative system, which will be to thoughtful students of a thousand years hence what Magna Charta is to us. What a group was here collected, within the curtain of the future, seeing nothing but the vault at their feet, and the banners of the past waving above their heads; and, wherever they thought they saw some way into the coming time, seeing wrongly, — mistaking their own fancy-painting on that curtain for discernment of what was behind it! And, behind that veil, agents work unheard, — Death at his grave-digging, and the people with their demands and their acclamations, and the trumpet-voice of conviction summoning prejudice to the surrender. But what they saw not, we, as survivors, see; and what they heard not, we hear: for now that curtain of futurity is hung up over our heads as banners of the past; and the summons of death, and of the popular will, and of individual conscience, are still audible to us; not in their first stunning crash, but as funereal echoes to which those banners float.

The Duke of York went to his grave sincerely mourned by many, and partially honored by many more who could not honestly grieve that he did not reach the throne.

Duke of
York.

In his youth, he had shown valor, and an earnest aspiration to good generalship in the campaigns in Flanders. During the thirty-two years that he held the office of commander-in-chief, he did eminent service to the State in his administration of the army; instituting and carrying through such reforms and new discipline as made his management in fact a recreation of that national force. His nature was frank and honorable, if only he had done justice to it. It endeared him to his friends, even to the point of inducing them to overlook, and almost to justify, his vices. The loyal cant of the day was, that in his vices "there was nothing un-English, nothing unprincely;" but the princes and people of England could not be expected to admit among their characteristics recklessness in sensual vice and pecuniary extravagance. His dissoluteness was, if not "unprincely," vulgar, as all selfish passion is; and his recklessness about debt was, we may surely say, eminently "un-English." We cannot give up probity in money-transactions as an English characteristic. As for his high Toryism, when all danger from it was past, men remembered that he was ill educated, and, by his position, precluded from the enlightenment which was flowing in upon men in humbler stations. It was the subject of grave apprehension, very reasonably, while he lived, with his foot upon the steps of the throne, and his eye upon the crown; but, as soon as he was let down into the grave, it was remembered with a sort of respectful compassion, as a delusion troublesome to himself, and a weakness which would, in a former age, have been regarded as a grace of royalty. His statue stands conspicuous on its pillar within sight of the Horse Guards, where so much of his business lay. It might be that some debtors, ruined by his cruel extravagance, might sigh in their prison when they heard of its erection; and some, whose domestic honor and peace had been tainted by his passions, might wonder at the strange distribution of homage in a State which professes the purity of Christianity; but it was pretty generally admitted, that he had done his country better service than princes often do, and that to his labors were partly owing the successes of our wars, and the high character of our military forces. His death took place on the 5th of January, 1827, and his funeral on the 20th.¹

The Duke of Wellington succeeded, as has been said, to his office of commander-in-chief; and his sailor-brother, the Duke of Clarence, to his prospect of the throne. On the 15th of February, a message from the King was presented to both Houses of Parliament, recommending an addition to the income of the Duke and Duchess of Clarence, in view of the increased expenses which would be occasioned to them

Grant to the Duke of Clarence.

¹ Hansard, xvi. p. 475.

by the Duke's proximity to the throne. A good deal of objection was made to this in the Commons, but none in the Lords. The great distress of the people, whose condition had just been made the subject of a royal letter to the bishops, and the inconvenience of the precedent, were the grounds of opposition; and these were met by the plea, that the maintenance of royal dignity was an object which must not give way to temporary pressure, and that the sum proposed was only a portion of what would be saved to the country by the death of the Duke of York. Up to this time, the income of the Duke and Duchess of Clarence had been 26,500*l*. By the death of the elder brother, an addition of 3,000*l*. a year would now accrue; and it was proposed that Parliament should grant 9,000*l*. more, — namely, 3,000*l*. to the Duke, and 6,000*l*. to the Duchess, — by which their joint income would be raised to 38,500*l*. After much opposition and debating, it was thus settled.

It was on Thursday, the 15th of February, that this royal message was presented; and it was taken into consideration the next evening, — Friday. Lord Liverpool brought forward the subject in the Upper House, and spoke upon it.¹ He was never seen to be better or more cheerful. The next morning, Saturday, his servant was surprised at not hearing the bell, as usual, after breakfast, and went into his master's study, where Illness of Lord Liverpool. he found Lord Liverpool lying on the floor in an apoplectic fit. Whether he would live was for some time doubtful; but it was quite certain that his political career was ended. His colleagues wrote in their private letters, "Heaven knows who will succeed him." Some felt it "a tremendous blow under present circumstances." The principal of these circumstances was the universal expectation — a state of doubtful expectation — about the proposed Corn Bill, and some legislation about the Catholics. The King was at Brighton; and Mr. Peel went down to inform him of the event. Mr. Canning was at Brighton, confined to his bed by the illness caught at the funeral; and Mr. Huskisson was confined to the house in London from the same cause. Mr. Canning had charge of the Corn Bill, and he was awaiting with extreme anxiety the approaching discussion of the Catholic question. At such a moment as this, the Premier was struck down; and the two friends could neither meet, nor wait upon the King. We have the Lord Chancellor's first impressions on the occasion: "If other things made it certain that he would otherwise succeed him, I should *suppose* Canning's health would not let him undertake the labor of the situation. But," he adds, in his usual temper towards Canning, "ambition will attempt any thing."² Two days after, the Chancellor became very

¹ Hansard, xvi. p. 517.

² Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 583.

oracular, as was natural, when it was certain that there was nothing to be known. "This, at any time," he says, "would be an event of importance; so immediately after the Duke of York's death, and upon the eve of the days when the great questions of the corn-trade and Catholic emancipation are to be discussed and decided, it is of importance so great, that nobody can be certain whether it is not of so much importance as to render almost certain wrong decisions upon these vital questions."¹ If we can make out any meaning here, it is that Lord Eldon now supposed a liberal policy sure to prevail, and believed that Lord Liverpool had been the only security against the dreaded "changes in our institutions." The letter proceeds: "Nobody knows, and nobody can conjecture with probability, how soon the illness of the Minister will, as it seemingly must, dissolve the Administration, or how another is to be formed and composed. Speculation as to this is very busy, and politicians are all at work. The opposition are in high spirits, and confidently expecting to enjoy the loaves and the fishes. They may, but they also may not, be disappointed."

The first thing decided upon was to wait awhile, for the chance of Lord Liverpool recovering sufficiently to send in his resignation. Week after week, as it passed away, showed this to be less and less probable; and, by the end of March, it was found necessary to set about appointing his successor. Lord Liverpool and Mr. Canning. Setting aside their political relations, the loss of Lord Liverpool was very affecting to Mr. Canning. Through life, the two had been close personal friends, from the time of their first meeting at college. They were born in the same year: they were inseparable at Christ Church, where they laughed at one another's whims, — Jenkinson's brown coat, with buttons bearing the initials of the great orators, and Canning's gloriously nonsensical verses; and where, in the intervals of their mirth, they discussed the gravest subjects of human interest, with the earnestness belonging to the genius of the one, and the integrity of the other. They entered Parliament at the same time, under Mr. Pitt, and were never separated in their private regards by the differences on public matters which occasionally arose. This is highly honorable to them both. It must be a strong friendship which could enable the man of the world to bear with the views of the man of genius, when those views were too large for his comprehension; and which would enable the man of genius to bear with the negative qualities of the *médiocre* man of the world, in times which demanded all the energies of every statesman. In political life, each was largely indebted to the other; as is more apparent to us now than perhaps it ever was to them.

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 584.

Lord Liverpool was not, apparently, fully aware that it was Canning who had of late years made his government illustrious in the eyes of the world; but every one now knows that it was so. And Canning could hardly estimate at the time the influence of Lord Liverpool's presence in securing him a field for the exercise of his statesmanship. If he had entered the Cabinet, he could hardly have remained there, during the last four years, under any other Premier of the same politics as Lord Liverpool. It was no time for weighing these considerations, when the news of his friend's seizure came to him as he lay fevered in his bed. He had but just returned from visiting Lord Liverpool at Bath, where he had gone, after the Duke's funeral, to improve his health. He had come back worse than he went; and, in the depth of his illness, this news reached him. The effects of grief, anxiety, and sickness were visible enough when he appeared in the House to bring forward the measures he had in charge, and to encounter the onslaught of persecution, which was never mitigated by any touch of reverence, sympathy, or even common humanity, till it had laid him low.

The country was not the worse for the loss of Lord Liverpool, though his official life had been useful in its way, at certain periods of his career. He was a good balance-wheel when the movements of parties might otherwise be going too fast. He had no striking ability, either in action or in speech. He was diligent, upright, exceedingly heavy, and, as his friends well knew, extremely anxious under his sense of responsibility. He could not throw off his cares for a day or an hour, — either in the free air of Wimbledon, or in his trips to Bath; and it ended in his cares throwing off his life. He declared, in private, that on no one day for twenty-five years of official life had he seen his heap of letters on the table, without a sharp pang of apprehension, and a sense of reluctance to break the seals, — so strong did he feel the probability to be every day that something was going wrong in some part of the world. It appears strange that a man of his cast, merely respectable in abilities and characteristics, should have held office so long, — the premiership for fifteen years, — in times of such stir and convulsion; but the fact was, his highest ability was that of choosing and conciliating able men, and keeping them together in sufficient harmony to get through their work, if nothing more. Nobody quarrelled with him; and he set his whole weight against his colleagues quarrelling with each other; so that the Eldons and the Cannings, the Bexleys and the Huskissons, met in council, week after week, for years together, inwardly despising and disliking each other, but outwardly on decent terms, and all working in their own way, in their own offices. This could not

Lord Liverpool as Minister.

go on for ever ; and, as we have seen, Lord Liverpool himself knew it could not go on much longer. He meant to retire presently, to leave the way open for some settlement of the Catholic question. Thus, the nation did not sustain much loss by the brief shortening of his term ; nor was there the affectation of mourning a great political loss. There was decorous regret that such a penalty on toil and conscientiousness should have overtaken so meritorious a public servant ; and then ensued extreme eagerness to know what influence would next be in the ascendant. This could not be ascertained till the following April.

In the meantime, the Corn Bill must first be brought forward. It was committed to Mr. Canning's care, as leader in the Commons. He was extremely anxious about it, as ^{The Corn Bill.} it was the elaborate work of his two friends, Lord Liverpool and Mr. Huskisson ; and the subject was not one that he felt at home in. His diffidence was aggravated by the misfortune, that he and Mr. Huskisson were kept apart by illness, in London and Brighton, and were thus precluded from personal conference about the Bill.¹ The only thing that could be done was to send a confidential friend backwards and forwards, till each Minister was in possession of the mind of the other. If the conclusion of the matter could have been foreseen, or the causes of that ending have been made known as they ought to have been, the trouble and anxiety might have been in great part spared. The Duke of Wellington made an end of the measure, by heading the opposition in the House of Lords, and carrying an amendment which vitiated the Bill too seriously to allow it to be proceeded with ; the very Bill which had been prepared by the Premier, and fully sanctioned by the Cabinet, of which the Duke was, at the time, a member.² It was not till the 1st of March that Mr. Canning was well enough to bring forward the measure ; which he did in the form of a set of resolutions, intended to be the foundation of a new corn-law. According to the resolutions, foreign corn might always be imported, free of duty, to be warehoused ; and it might always be let in for home consumption on payment of certain duties : for instance, the duty on wheat was to be 1s. when wheat was at 70s., and to increase 2s. with every decrease of 1s. in price ; and so on, in different proportions, with other kinds of grain. The resolutions were well received and supported ; the House rejecting, by a majority of three to one, on an average, the amendments proposed on behalf of the landed interest. A Bill — the new corn-law as it was supposed to be — was brought in on the 2d of April, and passed on the 12th, before the House adjourned for the Easter holidays.³ When Parliament re-assem-

¹ Memoir of Huskisson's Speeches, p. 129.

² Hansard, xvi. p. 772.

³ Hansard, xvii. p. 392.

bled, Mr. Canning was Premier, and the conduct of the Bill in the Upper House devolved upon Lord Goderich (Mr. Robinson, under his new title). Under some extraordinary misconception, the Duke of Wellington declared, that he believed the amendment he had to propose would be acceptable to the government; whereas it went to establish the principle of prohibition, which it was the main object of the measure to cast aside.¹ His amendment proposed, that "foreign corn in bond should not be taken out of bond until the average price of corn should have reached 66s." The government was left in a minority of eleven, in the vote on this clause, on the 12th of June; and the bill was therefore abandoned.²

The debate on the Catholic question came on on the 5th of March, and continued two days. The anti-Catholic speakers, who mustered strong in this new Parliament, wandered away from the consideration of the motion before the House into the whole set of old topics, — back to the treaty of Limerick, and wide among the doings of the priests at the late elections; and Mr. Canning had to bring them back to the question of the night, which was: "That this House is deeply impressed with the expediency of taking into consideration the laws imposing civil disabilities on His Majesty's Roman-Catholic subjects."³ Mr. Canning's speech was deeply impressive to the House; but it would have been more so, and have been received as an oracle by the Catholics, if it could have been known that these were his last words on the subject which he had at heart during the whole of his career. The danger of neglect, of letting things alone in such a crisis as had arrived, was his last topic on this last occasion. After stating that "one bugbear was fairly disposed of," — the coronation oath, — he said,⁴ "What are the other dangers which exist at this eleventh hour, I have yet to learn; but a singular fate has attended this question. The question is, 'Will you do as we propose? or will you do nothing? or what will you do?' And, secondly, 'What dangers do you apprehend?' Now, to the question: 'Will you do as we propose? or will you do nothing? or will you do something else?' the answer is clear enough: 'We will not do as you propose.' But to the two remaining branches of the question no answer is given. And when we ask, 'What dangers do you apprehend from the passing of a Bill similar to that of 1813?' we are also unable to get any answer. . . . I conjure the House to reflect, that the motion is merely a declaration, on the part of the House, that the state of Ireland and of the Roman-Catholic population is such as to demand the consideration of the House. To this

¹ Hansard, xvii. p. 1097.

³ Hansard, xxi. p. 1009.

² Hansard, xvii. p. 1258.

⁴ Hansard, xvi. p. 1003.

proposition it is intended to oppose a direct negative, importing that the House does not think the state of Ireland, or the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, deserve consideration. That is the issue upon which the House is now going to divide. The resolution goes no further than that the House should adopt the opinion of its predecessors, who sent three Bills up to the House of Lords, of relief to the Roman Catholics. . . . On the other hand, if this resolution should be negatived,—if the House of Commons should decide that the consideration of the state of Ireland is not worthy to be entered upon,—then is the House of Commons changed indeed; and it would be more easy to imagine, than it would be safe for me to express, the consequence that may ensue from such a change.”

It was now just five years since Mr. Canning uttered in the House what he supposed would be his last appeal on behalf of the Catholics,—in 1822, previous to his intended departure for India. He was then mistaken; and now, when really uttering his last appeal, he was unconscious that it would be so. Never could he have been more earnest than now; for any retrogression of the Commons on this subject would be, at the moment, a most untoward circumstance for the cause and for himself. It was the moment when a new Administration was about to be formed; when its determining principle—whether avowed or not—was to be concession or opposition to the Catholic claims; and when the King himself was falling back, on the removal of the rivalry of the Duke of York. The loss of the Commons from the cause must be most disastrous at such a crisis. This loss, however, had to be sustained. The division took place a little before five in the morning of the 7th of March, in a House of five hundred and forty-eight members; and there was a majority of four against the motion. The anti-Catholic party *had* gained by the elections. The Marquis of Lansdowne had given notice in the Lords of a motion grounded on the petitions sent up by the Catholics; but, on this decision of the Commons, he withdrew it, fairly avowing that he dared not go forward, nor brave the consequences of the disappointment to the Catholics, if both Houses should display a majority against them.¹ This was an anxious season for the friends of the Catholics, to whom it appeared that the question had gone back, and who scarcely dared to reckon on the patience of their wronged fellow-subjects. But men rarely know what circumstances are really prosperous or adverse. This was but the step back, before the spring. It was too late now for the Catholics to be disheartened, when they had just seen what they could do in the field of the

¹ Hansard, xvi. p. 1083.

elections. They roused themselves for the struggle, which was to prove the final one.

First, this question broke up another Cabinet. Of the existing Cabinet, the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel were the strong men on the one side, and Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson on the other. Lord Liverpool had kept them together hitherto, he having been openly of the anti-Catholic party all his life; but being well known among his colleagues to have arrived at the conviction, and to be about to act upon it, that the friends of the Catholics must soon carry their point. The repressive and combining influence of Lord Liverpool being now removed, the diverse elements of the government parted off, and rose up against each other; so that it became immediately necessary to decide which should have the ascendancy. It was not yet considered indispensable, that there should be an undivided Cabinet on this question. The question might be left open; but whether the Premier should be of the one way of thinking or the other was the particular which could not but bring this all-important matter to an issue.

Mr. Canning could not be dispensed with. The public showed that it thought so; the King certainly thought so; and the members of the Administration and their friends betrayed in their correspondence, and by their methods of consultation, that, if they themselves did not think so, they feared that everybody else did. Mr. Canning also held the second place in the Cabinet, and had the first right to look to the premiership, and to be consulted upon it. He it was, therefore, whom the King summoned, on the 27th of March, when it was found to be in vain to wait for any amendment in the state of Lord Liverpool, and when the restlessness of the country and of political parties showed that there must be no more delay in forming an administration. The interview was long, and embarrassing to both. The King requested Mr. Canning's opinion on the practicability of placing at the head of the Cabinet a statesman who held Lord Liverpool's avowed opinions on the Catholic question. Mr. Canning declared that it might, he believed, be done, and a wholly anti-Catholic government be formed, in which case, of course, he must retire; and he plainly intimated that he could not remain in the government except as Prime-minister. This could have been no surprise to the King; for there was no statesman of Mr. Canning's way of thinking, to whom he could, with any propriety, have been made subordinate. Yet the King could not bring himself at once to the point of nominating Mr. Canning; and this first negotiation was at an end.

What might have been the next step, if the King had been let alone, there is no saying; but some anti-Catholic members of the

aristocracy, alarmed at the strength of the popular expectation in favor of Mr. Canning, took a step of greater boldness than the sovereign was disposed to endure, and ruined their own cause by an attempt at intimidation which roused the royal resentment. A Tory peer, a duke and privy-councillor,¹ requested an audience of the King, and told His Majesty that he came as the express representative of eight peers,—all, like himself, holding great electoral influence,—to declare, that, if Mr. Canning was placed at the head of the Cabinet, they would all withdraw their support from the government. This took place on the fourth day after the abortive interview. The effect of this Mr. Canning consulted. disrespectful and corrupt proceeding was to determine the King on the instant to send for Mr. Canning.

By this time, Mr. Canning was aware, that, if he became Premier, the government must lose the services of Mr. Peel; for Mr. Peel had told him so on the 29th of March. Between these two statesmen there was, with all their differences of Mr. Peel. opinion, and much clashing of interests at this crisis, no ill-will. Private letters of Mr. Canning's are in existence, which declare that Mr. Peel was the only seceding member of the government who behaved well to him at this time; and it is known that he declared Mr. Peel to be his rightful political heir and successor.

Mr. Peel's difficulty in this instance was a peculiar one. It arose from his being responsible in his office for the administration of the affairs of Ireland. He was disposed for a Cabinet divided on this question, as the House of Commons had just shown itself so very equally divided; and on almost every other question of importance, he was of the same mind with those of his colleagues who sat with him in the Commons. But he felt that he could not fill his place in the House as Irish Minister with any satisfaction under a Premier who advocated a policy in regard to the Catholics opposite to his own. Such were his reasons, assigned by himself in a frank and admirable letter to Lord Eldon, of the date of the 9th of April.² He made no difficulty that could be helped, and caused no embarrassment. He spoke to no one but the King and Mr. Canning on the subject; and his intentions and feelings became known only by the King's mention of them to the Chancellor. It is a curious circumstance, that, while Mr. Canning was telling the King that he believed an anti-Catholic Cabinet could be formed, and offering in that case to retire, Mr. Peel was telling His Majesty that he "could not advise the attempt to form an exclusive Protestant government;" and that he could not be a party even to the attempt, if it should be contemplated. He was confident that the King was

¹ Life of Canning, p. 360.

² Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 590.

of the same opinion. And so it appears by the result. This letter of Mr. Peel's was written on the 9th of April, and it was on the 10th that the king sent for Mr. Canning; not now, as before, merely in his character of privy-councillor, to consult and advise, but to receive the charge of forming an administration. The *animus* with which this result was anticipated by his anti-Catholic colleagues is shown in various of Lord Eldon's letters.¹ "I think — who could have thought it? — that Mr. Canning will have his own way. I *guess* that I, Wellington, Peel, Bathurst, Westmoreland, &c., will be out." Some occasional notices in the old Chancellor's letters of the temper of the times unveil to us something of what the "political adventurer" had to go through, on taking possession of the highest political seat in the empire, and make but too natural his rapid descent to the grave.² "The whole conversation in this town," writes Lord Eldon from London, "is made up of abusive, bitterly abusive talk of people about each other, — all fire and flame. I have known nothing like it." — "I think political enmity runs higher, and waxes warmer, than I ever knew it."³ Thus it was, in private, before and during the Easter recess; and, after that recess, no one needed any other information than the reports of the debates, to learn how far the spirit of persecution, and the language of personality, could go among noblemen and gentlemen who were charged with the gravest of all trusts, but could neither discern the greatness of the man whose heart they were breaking, nor the needs of the time which he was summoned to rule. Doubtless it was the needs of the time, the political transition, that they quarrelled with, though they themselves believed, as did their victim, that it was the man; but, if this goes to palliate their conduct in any degree, it did not to him lessen the smart of the wounds they inflicted in every possible mode, and at every possible opportunity.

We have seen that Mr. Canning received the King's commands on the 10th of April. He immediately applied to all his late colleagues, inviting them to remain in their offices. Of the replies that he received, the most extraordinary appears to be that of the Duke of Wellington, who requested to know, before signifying his intentions, who was to be at the head of the government. Mr. Canning's answer of course was, that it is usually understood that the individual charged with the construction of a government is to be at the head of it; and then the Duke resigned.⁴ "It was on the 11th of April," to adopt Mr. Canning's own statement of the affair, "that he received the resignation of Lord Westmoreland. Of the resignation of Mr. Peel he was aware some days before.

Resignation of
seven Cabinet
Ministers.

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 588.

³ Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 604.

² Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 588.

⁴ Hansard, xxii. p. 522.

He received the resignation of the Duke of Wellington on the 12th, at half-past ten, A.M. Lord Bexley sent in his shortly after. With these, and the verbal resignation of Mr. Peel, he went to St. James's. Those of Lord Eldon and Lord Bathurst arrived during his absence, and did not reach him till he was in the King's closet, having been sent after him, according to his directions, in case of their arrival. He would state further, that, so far were they from anticipating the resignation of Lord Eldon, that the King and himself were both under the delusion that there were the best reasons to expect the support of his services in the new arrangements. . . . It was bare justice to Lord Eldon to say, that his conduct was that of a man of the highest feelings of honor, and that throughout it had been above all exception."¹ Mr. Canning presented this handful of resignations to the King, saying: "Here, Sire, is that which disables me from executing the orders I have received from you, respecting the formation of a new administration. It is now open to Your Majesty to adopt a new course, for no step has yet been taken in the execution of those orders that is irrecoverable; but it becomes my duty fairly to state to Your Majesty, that, if I am to go on in the position where you have been pleased to place me, my writ must be moved for to-day,"—it was the last day before the Easter recess, and orders for the moving of the writ had been given; "for, if we wait till the holidays, without adopting any definite steps, I see that it is quite hopeless for me to attempt to persevere in the objects I have undertaken." The King, in reply, gave him his hand to kiss, and confirmed him in his appointment; declaring, however, according to some accounts, that he himself was resolved to oppose any further concessions to the Catholics.² In two hours after this interview in the royal closet, the House of Commons was ringing with acclamations; Mr. Wynn moving, "that a new writ be issued for the borough of New-
port, in consequence of the Right Hon. George Can-
ning having accepted the office of First Lord-commissioner of the Treasury."³

The Minister had now the Easter recess before him for constructing his Cabinet; but there were more resignations to come in. The Duke of Wellington gave up his office in the ordnance, as well as that of commander-in-chief. Lord Melville, though agreeing with Mr. Canning on the Catholic question, declined holding office with some whom he believed Mr. Canning about to solicit. The master of the mint, Mr. Wallace; the attorney-general, Sir Charles Wetherell; and the judge-advocate, Sir J. Beckett,—next resigned; and even four of the King's household

¹ Hansard, xvi. p. 1434.² Annual Register, 1827, p. 102.³ Hansard, xvii. p. 390.

officers. There must have been among these personages an expectation of a new time, — of a transition to what they called Radicalism or revolution, under a Minister of liberal politics; for it is difficult to see how some of them could be affected by Mr. Canning's becoming the head of a Cabinet in which the Catholic question was still to remain open, the King's resolution to oppose further concession being understood.

It was this which made Mr. Canning's task a very difficult one, it being impossible for him to fill up the vacant offices with men of his own opinions on the great question of the day. The task was achieved, however, by the 27th of April. On that day every office in the government was declared to be filled up. Lord Bexley returned to office; the heir presumptive became Lord High Admiral the day after Lord Melville's resignation of his office at the head of the admiralty; Sir John Copley, created Lord Lyndhurst, became Chancellor; Lord Anglesey went to the ordnance, Lord Dudley to the foreign, and Mr. Sturges Bourne to the home office. Mr. Robinson, who had remained, was removed to the Upper House, with the title of Lord Goderich, in order to lead the business there. Mr. Canning himself assumed the chancellorship of the exchequer, uniting it with that of First Lord of the Treasury, in order that Mr. Huskisson and he might work with the fuller effect together in matters of finance. Thus the Minister was prepared with a complete government to meet the House of Commons on its assembling on the 1st of May, to the surprise of not a few of both friends and foes, who had believed it impossible that he could surmount such a mass of impediments as had been thrown in the way of his entrance into the highest office of the State. The curiosity was now intense to see how he would proceed.

The times were so busy and exciting, that men had hardly leisure to note, as they would have done at any former period, the retirement of the aged Chancellor. Perhaps there was in their minds, perhaps there was in his own, a doubt whether he had retired, never to return, — he who had talked of it so often and so long, and had yet adhered to office for a longer time than any other Chancellor, lay or clerical, from the Norman conquest downwards.¹ His tenure of office had been but once interrupted, and had extended over within a few weeks of a quarter of a century. He felt sensibly the calmness with which his resignation was received by the political world and the country at large, though he was ready to be at least invited back to office under future ministers. He has left on record one really painful fact in connection with his retirement, — a fact so painful as to enable us partly to account for his low estimate of

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 605.

persons beyond his own set of acquaintances. He writes, on the eve of his retirement: "If I had all the livings in the kingdom vacant when I communicated my resignation,—for what *since that* falls vacant I have nothing to do with,—and they were cut each into threescore livings, I could not do what is asked of me by letters received every five minutes, full of eulogies upon my virtues, all which will depart when my resignation actually takes place, and all concluding with, 'Pray, give me a living before you go out.'"¹ He delivered up the seals on the 30th of April, the day before the re-assembling of Parliament. His usual self-gratulation did not fail him on this great occasion of his life. By the heartiness with which Lord Eldon is always found rejoicing in his own conscientiousness, as in a special gift of Providence, it seems as if he could not suppose that other men could ordinarily desire and endeavor to do their duty. He writes: "I have now taken my farewell of office. . . . I bless God that he has enabled me to look back to a period of nearly half a century, spent in professional and judicial situations and stations, with a conviction, that the remembrance of the past will gild the future years which his providence may allow to me, not merely with content, but with that satisfaction and comfort, and with much happiness, of which the world cannot deprive me."² This is characteristic; and the old Chancellor might be partly right in his special self-gratulation. We hope that most public men are at least as conscientious as he; but there are probably few who are so confident and exulting in their own righteousness. The enjoyment of his special prerogative seems, however, to have been far from sufficient for his peace. It was necessary to him that others should value him as highly as he valued himself; and it is not long before we find him sore and irritated at that diminution of his political importance, which was the natural and inevitable consequence of his retirement into private life.

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 594.

² Life of Lord Eldon, ii. p. 596.

CHAPTER II.

THE session last two months after the re-assembling of Parliament on the 1st of May. It was a season of turbulence and rancor, which it is painful and humbling to look back upon. The only consolation is in the reflection, that the disorder, though it took the appearance of hatred between individual men, was in fact a feature of the state of political transition. The min-
Enmity to Mr. Canning.ister was the professed object of the rancor, and it was he who sank under it; but not even he, with all his powers, and all his attributes of offence, could have caused such perturbation at another time, and in another position. The real conflict was between old and new principles of policy; and the wounds which men received were as representatives of those principles. In as far as Mr. Canning could keep this truth before him, he was able to bear what was inflicted; but he could not always keep it in full view. Perhaps no man of any temperament could have done so; and it was not to be expected of one so sensitive as he. Yet he might have got through, if he had had any fair chance of health; but he had been ill ever since the funeral in that cold January night, which had been nearly fatal to many besides himself. Now, feeble and exhausted, he was to experience no mercy. Those who had differed from his former politics, and those who detested his present aims; all who had suffered under his sarcastic wit; all who were disappointed that he had overcome his late difficulties; all who were jealous of a "political adventurer" having risen over the heads of the aristocracies both of birth and of political administration,—stimulated one another to insult, and overpower, if they could, the Minister who stood exposed to all attacks,—incapable of aid, because himself so immeasurably greater than all who would have aided, as than all who attacked him. During the remainder of the session, he was a lion at bay. The lion may turn a flashing eye upon his hunters, and shake the woods with his roar: but a sufficiency of wounds must prostrate him at last; and so it was here. Here was the flashing eye, the indomitable valor, and the thundering utterance, under which the assailants quailed for the moment. But the powers of life gave

way; and, in a little while, only the silent ghost remained in the old haunts, to call up the awe and remorse which were now too late. It is universally agreed, that personality and insult were never before so rank in any assembly of English gentlemen as now, during the two months following Mr. Canning's accession to the premiership.

The most tangible complaint of his adversaries was about "coalition;" and this fact is warrant enough for the supposition that the discontent was with the time, though the complainers themselves believed it was with the man. The minister was supported by the Whigs; and the reason why was, The Whigs support the government. that he and they agreed upon most subjects of importance. About reform of Parliament they differed; but, as Canning's arch-foe, Lord Grey, declared, there was no near prospect of carrying this question; and it was, in his opinion, no reason for separating men who could unite to carry points of more pressing urgency. They differed about the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts; and this was nearly all. They were agreed upon the leading question of the times,—the Catholic disabilities, and on all matters of foreign and commercial policy and finance, by which Mr. Canning was most eminently distinguished. The attendants at Pitt dinners, the Tories who professed to worship the statesman who desired Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform, were not exactly qualified to cry out upon the union between Mr. Canning and the Whigs, whose differences might be called almost nominal, in comparison with those which should have divided the Tories from Mr. Pitt. The fact was, that names and recollections and insignia connected the Tories with Mr. Pitt, while political principles separated them; and political principles united the Whigs and Mr. Canning, while names, recollections, and insignia severed them. Some were wise enough to see that principles are of more importance than badges and names; and we should be lenient towards those who are less enlightened, remembering how, in ordinary times, these names and badges serve as safeguards of political honor and consistency, and that it is not every one who can see the moment when they cease to be true, and ought therefore to be discarded. All the wisest people—and Mr. Canning assuredly for one—would have been thus lenient, if the offended persons had kept within the bounds of temper and courtesy. For the prevailing rancor, however, there could be no excuse.

The enmity appeared not only in connection with the explanations which necessarily took place on all sides after the re-assembling of Parliament. No one subject of the few brought forward during these two months could be debated, or even touched upon, without occasion being taken to cavil at the new Adminis-

tration, and especially its head. But of all the shafts which were aimed at him, it is believed that none struck so deep as one — or rather a quiverful — from the hands of Lord Grey. In Speech of Lord Grey. a speech of apparent calmness, of deep melancholy, of affecting unconsciousness of the destiny awaiting himself and his victim, and of the most intense personal animosity against Mr. Canning, Lord Grey opened his views in the House of Lords on the 10th of May.¹ He believed his own political life to be closed; and he declared in pathetic terms his sense of loneliness in this latter stage of his life. He did not blame his brother Whigs for their coalition with Mr. Canning, if their personal feelings did not forbid it; but his did. He avowed his want of confidence in the Minister, and gave his reasons for it. A more striking and mournful instance can hardly be found than this speech of the effect of prejudice, in blinding one great man to the merits, even to the most familiar attributes, of another. Lord Grey had soon occasion to show how well he could bear misconception and rancor; but, if any thing could have shaken his firmness in his own hour of the ordeal, it must have been the remembrance of this fatal attack on Canning, — so insolent, hard, and cold, so insulting and so cruel! As might be expected, from the state of mind which produced it, the speech was full of misconstructions and mistakes. As far as its matter was concerned, nothing could have been easier than to answer it; but the question was how? The practice of answering in one House the personal attacks made in another is radically objectionable; and Mr. Canning had the greatest reluctance to have recourse to this apparently only method; and, besides, he was not in a state of health which would have borne him through such an exertion. He believed that ere long he should be able to reply to Lord Grey in person; but they never met more.² Lord Grey's political friends, now the allies of the Minister, did full justice to Mr. Canning's character in the Upper House; but this particular speech was never efficiently answered, and the thought of it rankled in the breast of the victim to the last.

When the Commons proceeded to business, there was something almost as perplexing as strange in the aspect of the House, — Mr. Brougham and Sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Tierney and Sir Robert Wilson, sitting on the ministerial benches; and some, who had till now scarcely known any other seat, finding themselves on the opposite side. The one point in which all parties appeared to agree was in wishing the session over. In the present state of men's minds, no great question could be discussed with due calmness; and the ministerial members especially wished that their relations with the Cabinet should become more

¹ Hansard, xvii. pp. 720-733.

² Life of Canning, p. 366.

assured and consolidated before they exposed the greatest questions of the time to the passionate treatment of the legislature. Thus, not only were notices of motions on parliamentary reform, and repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts,—Mr. Canning's great points of difference with his new allies,—withdrawn, but also two on the Catholic question, which was too serious a matter now to be committed to the forces of such a tempest as at present perturbed the world of politics.

A motion, tending to take bankruptcy matters from under the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery, was negatived by a large majority. Mr. Hume failed in his endeavor to get repealed that one of the Six Acts of 1819 which imposed a stamp on cheap periodical publications.¹ On the ground of petitions from some of the ports, a committee was asked for to inquire into the state of the shipping interest; and this called up Mr. Huskisson to justify his policy by such clear proofs of the increased employment of British shipping, both absolutely and in relation to foreign shipping, that the mover, General Gascoyne, Mr. Huskisson's colleague in the representation of Liverpool, abstained from pressing for a division.² Two Bills, attacking some of the worst evils of the game-laws, those incessant rebukes to our pride of progress and civilization, reached the third reading, and then were thrown out,—Lord Wharncliffe's by a majority of one, the Marquis of Salisbury's by a majority of sixteen. Lord Suffield, however, obtained the legal prohibition of man-traps and spring-guns, and other such barbarous defences of game at the expense of men.³ Mr. Peel obtained some important improvements in the criminal law.⁴ Five Acts were passed under his management, by which a great simplification of the law was effected, much old rubbish got rid of, and a way prepared for further reforms. Some corrupt boroughs were doomed to disfranchisement; but the session closed before the necessary steps were taken. The new Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to move for a Finance Committee in the next session; and there was therefore little discussion of the budget of the present, which was brought forward on the 1st of June.⁵ The view which he presented of the affairs of the country was dark enough. The people were hardly yet beginning to recover from the depression of 1826. All were so far satisfied that it was better to leave the country to itself than to attempt at present any financial innovations, that Mr. Canning's resolutions with regard to supply met with no opposition; and all

¹ Hansard, xvii. p. 1063.

² Hansard, xvii. p. 296.

³ Hansard, xvii. p. 1098.

⁴ Hansard, xvii. p. 665.

⁵ Hansard, xvii. p. 934.

financial discussion was deferred till the committee of next session should be moved for.¹ Mr. Canning moved and carried an amendment on a motion of Mr. Western's respecting the corn-laws; the amendment being grounded on the Bill which had passed the House in the spring, and been thrown out by the mistake of the Duke of Wellington. The last words of the last speech of Mr. Canning in Parliament related to the conduct of the Duke of Wellington in this matter, and pledged the government to bring forward another Corn Bill in the next session, of the same bearing as that which had been lost. Great offence was given in the Upper House by his declaration, that he believed the Duke to have been, while meaning no harm, "made the instrument of others for their own particular views."² At the moment, some few voices cried, "Order!" but they were instantly lost in loud and continued shouts of "Hear, hear!" This speech was the last of the oratory which has become a tradition, and will continue to be so for an age to come. Except to answer a trifling question, on the 29th of June, Mr. Canning never spoke again in Parliament.

We have seen how meagre were the legislative results of the session. All were glad when it closed. Mr. Canning's enemies felt powerless in the face of his administration, — the strongest, it was believed, since the days of Pitt; while his adherents desired repose from parliamentary conflict in order to consolidate their combination, while their leader sorely needed it for the strengthening of his exhausted frame.³ On the 2d of July, the session was closed by commission, with a speech which noticed little but the gradual revival of manufacturing employment, and the royal hope that the corn-laws would be a subject of attention in the next session.

The time was now come for repose to many who greatly needed it after the excitement of a most stormy session, during which, if there was little done, there was more felt and said than some had strength of body and mind to bear. Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson were both very ill. Mr. Huskisson was ordered abroad by his physicians. Mr. Canning could not, of course, leave his post; and those who watched him with the almost idolatrous affection which he inspired in all who were near to him, saw that no outward repose could be sufficient for his needs. Time was the only healer that could avail him; for his oppression was of the mind. He keenly felt the loneliness of his position, — estranged from those who had always been his comrades, and whom he loved with all the capacity of his large heart; obliged to bear with their misconstruction, more painful

¹ Hansard, xvii. p. 1312.

³ Hansard, xvii. p. 444.

² Hansard, xvii. p. 1338.

to him than the insults of their followers; and prevented by former passages of his life, and by many ghosts of departed sarcasms of his own, from throwing himself into intimacy with his new coadjutors. He had a bitter sense of loneliness on the pinnacle of his power; and bitter was it to bear alone the remembrance of the usage he had met with during the last few weeks. Time and success would set all right. Of success he was certain; for he was not one who failed in his enterprises. Whether time would aid him depended on whether his bodily forces would hold out. Those who looked at his care-worn face and enfeebled frame trembled and doubted; but here were some months before him of the finest season of the year, and it would be seen what they could do for him. A week after the dispersion of Parliament, he dined with Lord Lyndhurst at Wimbledon, and sat down under a tree while warm with walking; and upon this followed a feverish cold, and rheumatism. Illness.

On the 18th, Mr. Huskisson called to take leave before his continental journey, and found him in bed. He looked so ill, that his friend observed, that he seemed the most in need of change and relaxation; to which Mr. Canning replied, "Oh! it is only the reflection of the yellow linings of the curtains." Mr. Huskisson went abroad the next day, to be brought back by the news of his friend's death.¹ Two days after this last interview, Mr. Canning removed to the Duke of Devonshire's villa at Chiswick, where Fox died, and inhabited the very room. He did not gain strength, though he attended to business, and on the 25th dined with Lord Clanricarde. He complained of weakness, and went home early. On the 30th, he waited upon the King, who was so alarmed at his appearance that he sent his own physician to him. Some friends dined with him the next day. He retired early, and never left his bed again.² His illness—internal inflammation—was torturing, dreadful to witness; but there was yet much strength left, for he lived till the 8th of August. On the 5th, the Sunday before his death, he desired his daughter to read prayers, according to his custom when he could not attend church. His agony ceased some time before his death, Death. when mortification had set in. It was a little before four in the morning of Wednesday, the 8th of August, when he breathed his last.

For some few days before, the nation had been on the watch in fearful apprehension of the news; but yet the consternation was as great as if this man had been supposed immortal. Multitudes felt that the life most important to the world of the whole existing generation had passed away. It was a life in which men had put their trust,—more trust than should perhaps be

¹ Memoir of Huskisson, p. 137.

² Life of Canning, p. 368.

put in any life, — from the isles of Greece to the ridges of the Andes. When those who had, by their persecution, sapped that life, now awoke to a sense of its importance, they must have been amazed at themselves, that they could have indulged spleen and passion in such a case, and have gratified their own prejudices and tempers at so fatal a cost. But thus it is when men serve, instead of mastering, their prejudices and passions: they know not what they do; and, if they discover what they have done, it is because it is too late. All the honor that could be given now was given. All the political coteries, the whole country, the whole continent, the whole world, echoed with eulogy of the departed statesman. From the most superficial and narrow-minded of his critics, who could comprehend nothing beyond the charm which invested the man, to the worthiest of his appreciators who were sensible of the grandeur of his intellect and the nobility of his soul, all now joined in grief and in praise; and none with a more painful wringing of the heart than those who had but lately learned his greatness, and the promise that it bore. Of his near friends, one sat unmoved and insensible in the midst of the universal lamentation, — Lord Liverpool, whose mind had died first, but whose frame remained after the grave had closed over his comrade and successor; and another, Mr. Huskisson, received, among the Styrian Alps, a report of Canning's convalescence, three days after he was actually dead. The mournful news soon followed; and, in a few days, Mr. Huskisson was on his way homewards, heart-stricken for the loss of his friend, and convinced, as he repeatedly and earnestly said, that his own political career was over.

Mr. Canning was fifty-six years of age. He was borne to his grave in the Abbey on the 16th of August. His family wished his funeral to be as private as the funeral of such a man could be; and they declined the attendance of several public bodies, and a multitude of individuals. But yet the streets were so thronged, in a deluge of rain, that a way was made with difficulty; and the Abbey was filled; and the grief of the mourners next the coffin hardly exceeded that which was evident in the vast crowd outside.¹ The next morning, the King bestowed a peerage on Mr. Canning's widow. Statues of the departed statesman, and monuments, exist in many places in the world; and it is well: but the niche in history, where the world holds the mind of the man enshrined for ever, is his only worthy monument.

It would be a curious speculation, but it is one not in our way at present, what Mr. Canning would finally have been and have done, if the great European war had lasted to the end of

¹ Annual Register, 1827, Chron. 143.

his life. His glory in our eyes is, mainly, that he was the Minister of the peace; his immortality lies in his foreign policy, by which peace was preserved, and freedom established, in a manner and to an extent which the potentate of the world of mind is alone competent to achieve. Czars, emperors, kings, and popes may make peace one with another, in a mechanical, and therefore precarious, manner; and this is all that, as the princes of the earth, they can do. The princes of the wider and higher realm of mind can do what Canning did, — spread peace over continents, and the great globe itself, vitally, and therefore permanently, by diffusing and establishing the principles of peace. Of a history of the peace, he must be the hero. In a state of war, he must have been something great and beneficent; for his greatness was inherent, and his soul was — like the souls of all the greatest of men — benign; and his power — the prerogative of genius — was paramount as often as he was moved to put it forth. Without being able to divine what he would have done in a state of continuous war; without daring to say that he would have calmed the tempest in its wrath as effectually as he forbade it to rise again, — we may be assured that he would have chosen to do great things, and have done what he chose.

One of the strongest evidences of Mr. Canning's power is the different light in which he appeared to the men about him, and to us. His accomplishments were so brilliant, his graces so exquisite, his wit so dazzling, that all observers were completely occupied by these, so as to be almost insensible to the qualities of mind which are most impressive to us who never saw his face. To us he is, as Lord Holland called him, "the first logician in Europe." To us he is the thoughtful, calm, earnest, quiet statesman; sending forth from his office the most simple and business-like despatches, as free from pomp and noise as if they were a message from some pure intelligence. We believe and know all that can be told of his sensibility, his mirth, and the passion of his nature; and we see no reason for doubting it, as, in genius of a high order, — in Fox, for instance, — the logic and the sensibility are so intimately united, that, in proportion as the emotions kindle and glow, the reason distils a purer and a yet purer truth. But to us, to whom the fire is out, there remains the essence; and by that we judge him. We hear of his enthusiasms, kindling easily at all times, but especially on the apprehension of great ideas; but what we see is, that no favorite ideas led him away from a steady regard to the realities of his time. We hear of his unquenchable fancy; but we see that it never beguiled him from taking a statesmanlike view of the society spread out below him, and waiting upon his administration of the powers of the government. He was one of the most practical of

statesmen ; and herein lay one of the most indisputable evidences of his genius. His genius, however, never was questioned. There might be, and there were, men who disparaged genius itself in its application to politics ; but there were none who doubted Canning's having it, whatever it might be worth.

His faults were not only unworthy of his genius, as all faults are, but of a nature which it is not easy to reconcile with genius of so high an order as his. Some of them, at least, were so. We may be able to allow for the confidence, and the spirit of enterprise, of adventure, which helped to obtain for him the name of "adventurer ;" the spirit which sprang into the political amphitheatre, ready for the combat on all hands, and thinking at first more of the combat than the cause : we can allow for this, because time showed how, when he knew life and its seriousness better, the cause of any principle became every thing to him, and the combat a thing not to be sought, however joyfully it may be met. The name of "adventurer" can never be given to him who resigned office rather than take part against the Queen, and gave up his darling hope of representing his university in order to befriend the Catholic cause. He was truly adventurous in these acts, but with the self-denial of the true hero.

We may allow, again, for the spirit of contempt, which was another of his attributes least worthy of his genius. It was but partial ; for no man was more capable of reverence, and much of his ridicule regarded fashions and follies, and affectations of virtue and vice : but still there was too much of it. It did visit persons ; and it did wound honest or innocent feeling, as well as exasperate some whose weakness was a plea for generous treatment. For this fault, however, he paid a high penalty, he underwent an ample retribution. Again, we may allow for some of his political acts, — such as countenancing restrictions on the press, — from the consideration of the temper and character of the times, and of his political comrades ; but they necessarily detract from our estimate of his statesmanship.

The same may be said about parliamentary reform. It is exactly those who most highly honor the advocates of reform of Parliament, who can most easily see into the difficulties, and understand the opposition, of the anti-reformers in Parliament. But there is no knowing what to say about Mr. Canning's opposition to the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. He knew the facts of the case, of course ; his advocacy of the Catholic claims shows that he knew the principle of it. His inconsistency in this case must be regarded as one of the waywardnesses, — one of the faults, at once intellectual and moral ; for he alleged no reasons, no plea which he himself would call reasonable, — which are the links that bind down even the greatest to their condition of

human frailty. As for all the rest of him, he was worthy of his endowments, and his great function in life. He was an excellent son to his humble mother, who died, happily for herself, before him, in March of the same year. He was nearly as large an object in the mental vision of all the leading men of his time, as in that of his proud mother, or of his adoring family and private friends. His mind and his name did indeed occupy a great space in the world, from the year 1822 till his death; and, when he was gone, there was a general sensation of forlornness throughout the nation, which made the thoughtful ponder how such dismay could be caused by the withdrawal of one from amidst its multitude of men.

CHAPTER III.

THE Catholics were now eager to learn their fate; and the nation, indeed many nations, had the strongest interest in knowing whether Mr. Canning's principles were still to reign by the Lord Goderich administration of his friends, or whether the old Tories were to return to power. It was soon known that there was still to be a mixed Cabinet, under the premiership of Lord Goderich.

Mr. Huskisson, feeble in health, and cast down by the loss of his life-long friend, wished to leave office. He had turned homewards on hearing the bad news, and remained a few days at Paris, partly to await the arrival of the despatches which were travelling after him, and partly for needful rest. If the Tories should come into power, or if a successor of his own views could be found, he intended to winter in the south of Europe. When his letters arrived, however, he found that he had no choice. The new Premier earnestly pressed him to take the colonial office; and the King had emphatically expressed his desire that Mr. Huskisson would return to enter upon his function as soon as possible. Thus, then, it was clear that Mr. Canning's policy was to be in the main pursued: and this was not the less believed for the Duke of Wellington's returning to the command of the army; for he made an open declaration, that he did so for the sake of the public service, and by no means from any sympathy with the proceedings of the Cabinet, of whose mixed character he disapproved as much as he had done five months before. He desired to be considered as standing aloof from the policy of the Cabinet. Of course, people asked why he could not have held his command in the same way during Mr. Canning's administration; to which he replied by an intimation that there were personal reasons for his secession at that time. The great difficulty was, what to do about the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, filled by the departed Premier. It was declined by two members of the Administration, and by Mr. Tierney; and at last it was given — unfortunately, as it turned out — to Mr. Herries, who had been Secretary of the Treasury under Lord Liverpool. If there were before

too many conflicting elements in the government to be securely controlled by any hand less masterly than Mr. Canning's, matters were pretty sure to go wrong now, after the admission of a functionary so little powerful in himself, and so little congenial with his colleagues, as Mr. Herries.¹ The Whigs were very near going out at once; but they were persuaded to stay, and make a trial. Lord Harrowby yielded his place to the Duke of Portland, Mr. Canning's brother-in-law, who had been Lord Privy Seal; and Lord Carlisle, an excellent moderator and pacificator, succeeded to the Duke of Portland.

This was the third Administration which had existed within seven months, and it had no great promise of stability. The recess, however, was before it, — the greatest advantage to a new Cabinet; and the nation supposed that by the end of the year it would be seen what it was worth, whether it could hold together, and what it proposed to do. By the end of the year, the case was indeed plain enough, — that it was about the weakest Administration on record. Difficulties occurred in several departments; but the most confounding were in that of foreign policy. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Dudley, raised to an earldom Lord Dudley. in September of this year, was a man of great ability, and much earnestness in his work; and he was fully possessed with Mr. Canning's views. At a former period, he had suffered under a nervous depression which too clearly indicated the probability of that insanity which ultimately prostrated him; but, at this time, he appeared to be capable of business, and to be eccentric in manner only, and not in ways of thinking. Some inconveniences occurred from his singularities, which made it rather a relief when he retired, in May of the next year; but they did not occasion any serious difficulties. He was in the habit of thinking aloud; and, amusing as this might be in Cabinet-council, it was dangerous anywhere else; and it is believed, that, in the autumn we have now arrived at, he directed to the Russian ambassador a letter intended for the French; to Prince Lieven a letter intended for Prince Polignac.² Prince Lieven took this for a *ruse*, and boasted of his penetration in being aware of the trick. It was the state of a portion of our foreign affairs which might have made this accident a most disastrous one. The truth is, the difficulty was great enough, without any aggravation from carelessness and unfortunate accidents.

The aspect of the Greek cause was much altered by the part the ruler of Egypt had been for some time taking Affairs of Greece. in the war. Mohammed Ali, the Pacha of Egypt, a tributary and vassal of the Porte, had brought all his energy and all his resources to the aid of his sovereign. Before he did

¹ Memoir of Huskisson, p. 142.

² Annual Register, 1833, Chron. 210.

this, the war dragged on, as it might have done for ever, if the parties had been left to their rivalry of weakness. But when the Pacha sent his son Ibrahim with ships, troops, money, and valor, to fight against the Greeks, every thing was changed. By the end of 1826, the whole of Western Greece was recovered by the Turks; and the Greek government had transferred itself to the islands. Men who find it at all times difficult to agree, are sure to fall out under the provocations of adversity; and the dissensions of the Greek leaders ran higher now than ever. Each was sure that the disasters of the country were owing to some one else. It was this quarrelling which prevented the Greeks from taking advantage of some successes of their brave general Karaïskaki, to attempt the relief of Athens, — closely pressed by the Turks. The Turkish force was soon to be strengthened by troops already on their march; and now, before their arrival, was the time to attempt to relieve Athens. Some aid was sent; and some fighting went on, on the whole with advantage to the Greeks: but nothing decisive was done till Lord Cochrane arrived among them, rated them soundly for their quarrels, and took the command of their vessels, — the Greek admiral, Miaulis, being the first and the most willing to put himself under the command of the British officer.¹ In a little while, Count Capo d'Istria, an official esteemed by the Russian government, was appointed President of Greece for seven years. The Turkish reinforcements had arrived, absolutely unopposed, before Athens; and this rendered necessary the strongest effort that could be made for the deliverance of the place. General Church brought up forces by land, and Lord Cochrane by sea; and, by the 1st of May, the flower of the Greek troops, to the number of ten thousand, were assembled before the walls of Athens. It was soon too clear to the British commanders, that nothing was to be done with forces so undisciplined, and in every way unreliable. The troops of Karaïskaki lost their leader, and incurred disaster by fighting without orders; and then, through a series of mistakes and follies, the issue became hopeless. Between eight and ten o'clock in the morning of the 6th, all was ruined. The killed and wounded of the Greeks amounted to 2500; and the rest were dispersed, like chaff before the wind. Of those who escaped, the greater number took refuge in the mountains. Lord Cochrane was compelled to throw himself into the sea, and swim to his ship. General Church strove hard to maintain his fortified camp at the Phalerus, with 3000 men whom he had collected; but, when he found that some of the Greek officers were selling his provisions to the enemy, he gave up, and retired to Egina, —

¹ Annual Register, 1827, p. 301.

sorely grieved, but not in despair. Lord Cochrane kept the sea, generally with his single frigate, the "Hellas," contributed to the cause by the United States, and now and then with a few Greek vessels, when their commanders had nothing better to do than to obey orders. He was alone when he took his station off Navarino, to watch the fleet of the Egyptian Ibrahim; and he had better have been alone when he went on to Alexandria, to look after the fleet which the Pacha was preparing there; for, when the Egyptians came out to offer battle, the Greeks made all sail homewards.

The Turks now supposed they had every thing in their own hands. On the intervention of the French admiral, De Rigny, they spared the lives of the garrison of the Acropolis, permitting them to march out, without their arms, and go whither they would. Then all seemed to be over. The Greeks held no strong places but Corinth and Napoli, and had no army; while the Turks held all the strong places but Corinth and Napoli, and had two armies at liberty—that of the Egyptian leader in the West, and of the Turkish seraskier in the East—to put down any attempted rising within the bounds of Greece. But, at this moment of extreme humiliation for Greece, aid was preparing; and hope was soon to arise out of despair. While Mr. Canning was fighting his own battles in Parliament, he had his eye on what was passing in Greece; and the fall of Athens, and the dispersion of the Greek forces, only strengthened his resolution, that the powers of Europe should hasten the interposition he had planned long before.

It was important to Russia, that Turkey should be weakened in every possible way; and Russia was therefore on ^{Three Allied Powers.} the side of the Greeks. The sympathies of France and England were on the side of the Greeks: but they must also see that Greece should be freed in reality, and that Turkey should not be destroyed; so they were willing to enter into alliance with Russia to part the combatants, preserve both, impose terms upon both, and see that the terms were observed. The Duke of Wellington had gone to St. Petersburg to settle all this; and the ministers of the three courts laid before the government of the Porte, at Constantinople, the requisition of the Allies. The great object was to separate the Turks and Greeks, the faithful and the infidels, who could never meet without fighting; and it was proposed, or, we may rather say, ordained by the Allies, that all the Turks should leave Greece, receiving compensation, in some way to be devised, for the property they must forsake.¹ The Greeks were to pay a tribute to the Porte, and

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, Appendix, pp. 102, 103.

to be nominally its subjects; and the Turkish government was to have some sort of veto on the appointment of officials: but substantially the choice of officers, and the enjoyment of their own modes of living, were to be left to the Greeks. As might be expected, the victorious Turk was amazed at this interference between himself and his rebellious subjects; and if he would not listen to dictation before the fall of Athens, much less would he afterwards. There was threat as well as dictation,—threat of enforcing the prescribed conditions; but the Porte braved the threat as loftily as it rejected the interference.

The rejection was too natural and reasonable not to be received as final; and the three Powers, therefore, proceeded to their acts of enforcement. It may be remembered, that Mr. Canning, ill and wearied, after the close of the session, exerted himself to transact some public business. The chief item of this business

Treaty of
London. was causing to be signed the treaty with France and Russia, concerning the affairs of Greece, which was finished off in London, and immediately despatched to Constantinople. In this treaty, the alliance and its purposes were justified on the ground of “the necessity of putting an end to the sanguinary contest, which, by delivering up the Greek provinces, and the isles of the Archipelago, to the disorders of anarchy, produces daily fresh impediments to the commerce of the European States, and gives occasion to piracies which not only expose the subjects of the contracting powers to considerable losses, but render necessary burdensome measures of suppression and protection.” England and France, moreover, pleaded the appeals they had received from the Greeks. The treaty concluded with a declaration and pledge of disinterestedness; of desiring nothing which the whole world besides was not at liberty to obtain.¹

A month from the date of the arrival of the instructions to the ambassadors at Constantinople was the time allowed to the Porte for consideration. If the terms of the three Powers were not by that time acceded to, they must proceed to the threatened enforcement, with every intention to preserve their own pacific relations with Turkey. The work of mediation was to be carried on by force, in such a case, under the plea that such a proceeding would be best for the interests of the contending powers, and necessary for the peace and comfort of the rest of the world. There were squadrons of all the three Powers ready in the Levant; that of Russia being commanded by Admiral Heiden; that of France by Admiral De Rigny; and that of England by Sir Edward Codrington.²

The formal note of the ambassadors at Constantinople was

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, Appendix, pp. 102, 103.

² *Annual Register*, 1827, p. 310.

delivered in on the 16th of August, with a notification that an answer would be expected in fifteen days. On the 30th of August, no reply having been volunteered, it was asked for, and given only verbally. Again the Porte declined recognizing any interference between itself and its rebellious subjects; and, when the consequent notice of enforcement was given, the Turkish government became, as any other government would, in like circumstances, bolder in its declaration of persistence in its own rights. Then began a season of activity at Constantinople such as had seldom been witnessed there; horses and provisions pouring in from the country, and sent off with ammunition, arms, and stores, to occupy the posts along the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. There was an incessant training of troops, under the eye of the Sultan or his vizier; and the capital seemed in the way to be turned into a camp. There is something striking in the only words the Turkish Minister would utter, in the final interview of the 14th of September: "God and my right," said he, in the calmest manner. "Such is the motto of England. What better answer can we give, when you intend to attack us?"¹

Meantime, the Egyptian fleet, strongly reinforced, had arrived in the Morea; and the English commander had no right to interpose any obstacle,—the time being the end of August, and the answer of the Porte not yet delivered. Sir Edward Codrington, however, hailed Ibrahim, informed him of what was going on at Constantinople, and offered him a safe-conduct, if he wished to return to Egypt. But if he chose to enter the harbor of Navarino, to join the Turkish fleet there, he must clearly understand that any of his vessels attempting to get out would be driven back. Ibrahim chose to enter. There now lay the ninety-two Egyptian vessels, and the Turkish fleet, crowded in the harbor; and off its mouth lay the British squadron on the watch. For some time, Ibrahim occupied himself in preparing his troops for action against the Greeks; but, on the 19th of September, he determined to try an experiment. He sent out a division of the Turkish fleet, to see if the English would let them pass. Sir Edward Codrington warned them back; but the Turkish commander replied that he was under no other orders than those of Ibrahim. The Egyptian prince, being referred to by both parties, and afterwards by the French admiral, who had come up with his squadron, and the danger of the case amply explained to him, declared that he would recall the Turkish ships, and wait the return of couriers whom he would send to Constantinople and to Alexandria; but that, as soon as he received orders to sail, his whole combined fleet would come out,

¹ Annual Register, 1827, p. 312.

and brave all opposition. A sort of armistice was agreed on, verbally, for twenty days, during a long conference between the Egyptian, French, and English commanders, on the 25th of September.¹ The two latter trusted to Ibrahim's word, that his ships would not leave the harbor for the twenty days, — ample facilities having been allowed by them for the victualling of his troops; and they sailed for Zante to obtain fresh provisions for their fleet. As soon as they were gone, only five days after the conference, Ibrahim put out to sea, to sail to Patras. On the 2d of October, an armed brig brought notice to Sir E. Codrington of this violation of the treaty. The admiral immediately returned with a very small force, met successively two divisions of the Turkish fleet, and turned them back to Navarino. In his wrath, Ibrahim carried war inland, slaughtering and burning, and driving the people to starvation, and even uprooting the trees wherever he went, that no resource might be left to the wretched inhabitants. As the spirit of the Treaty of London was thus broken through, the three admirals concluded to compel an adherence to the terms agreed upon at the conference, by entering the harbor, and placing themselves, ship by ship, in guard over the imprisoned fleets. The strictest orders were given that not a musket should be fired, unless firing should begin on the other side.² They were permitted to pass the batteries, and take up their position; but a boat was fired upon by the Turks, probably under the impression that she was sent to board one of their vessels. A lieutenant and several of the crew were killed. There was a discharge of musketry in return by an English and a French vessel; and then a cannon-shot was received by the French admiral's ship, which was answered by a broadside. The action, probably intended by none of the parties, was now fairly begun; and, when it ended, there was nothing left of the Turkish and Egyptian fleets but fragments of wreck strewing the waters. As the crews left their disabled vessels, they set them on fire; and, among the dangers of the day to the Allied squadrons, not the least was from these floating furnaces drifting about among a crowd of ships. The battle, which took place on the 20th of October, lasted four hours. The Turkish and Egyptian forces suffered cruelly. Of the Allies, the English suffered the most; but with them the loss was only seventy-five killed, and the wounded were under two hundred. The three British line-of-battle ships had to be sent home, after being patched up at Malta for the voyage.

The anxiety of mind of the three admirals is said to have been great, both on account of the calamity itself, and the doubt about how their conduct of the affair would be viewed at home.

¹ Annual Register, 1827, p. 314.

² Annual Register, 1827, p. 318.

One reasonable apprehension was, that there would be a slaughter of the Christians at Constantinople. But things were now conducted there in a more cautious and deliberate manner than of old. An embargo was laid on all the vessels in the harbor; but the mob of the faithful were kept in check. There were curious negotiations between the government and the ambassadors, while each party was in possession of the news, and wanted to learn how much the other knew. The Sultan himself wished to declare war at once; but his counsellors desired to gain time: and there were doubts, fluctuations, and bootless negotiations, in which neither party would concede any thing, for several weeks. The Turks would yield nothing about Greece, and the Allies would yield neither compensation nor apology for the affair of Navarino. On the 8th of December, however, it being clear that nothing could be gained by negotiation, the ambassadors left Constantinople. The Christian merchants might have embarked with them, but they must have left their property behind; and some preferred remaining. The Turkish authorities went to great lengths in encouraging them to do so; but whether this was from pacific inclinations, or from a sense of their value as hostages, could not be certainly known, and the greater number did not relish trusting themselves to conjecture in such a case. The day before the ambassadors left, an offer was made of a general amnesty to the Greeks. But this was not what was required. As they sailed out of the harbor, the Sultan must have felt that he was left, deprived of his fleet, at war with Russia, England, and France. But the coolness and ability shown by his government, in circumstances so extremely embarrassing as those of this autumn, were evidence that there were minds about him very well able to see, that, if Russia desired to crush him, England and France would take care that she did not succeed. As for the Greeks, their government was thankful to accept the mediation of the Allies; but so weak as to be unable to enforce any of their requisitions. Piracy, under the Greek flag, reached such a pass in the Levant, that Great Britain had to take the matter into her own hands. In the month of November, it was decreed, by an order in council, that the British ships in the Mediterranean should seize every vessel they saw under the Greek flag, or armed and fitted out at a Greek port, except such as were under the immediate orders of the Greek government. Thus we were carrying matters with a high hand in regard to both parties concerned in the unhappy Greek war. It is a case on which so much is to be said on every side, that it is impossible to help sympathizing with all parties in the transactions preceding and following the battle of Navarino: with the Greeks, for

Ambassadors
leave Constantinople.

Greek
Pirates.

reasons which the heart apprehends more rapidly than tongue or hand can state them; with the Porte, under the provocation of the interference of strangers between her and her rebellious subjects; with the Egyptians, in their duty of vassalage, however wrongly it might be performed; with the Allied Powers, in their sense of the intolerableness of a warfare so cruel and so hopeless going on amidst the haunts of commerce, and to the disturbance of a world otherwise at peace; and with two of those three Allies, in their apprehension of Turkey being destroyed, and Greece probably once more enslaved, by the power and arts of the third.

If the case appears to us now, so many years after the event, perplexing, and in every way painful, what must have been the sensation in the Cabinet of Lord Goderich on the arrival of the news of the battle of Navarino? The Cabinet was already torn by dissensions of its own, so serious and unmanageable that the Premier was meditating his resignation. At a moment when the members of the government were feeling that no one of them was sure of his function for a week, and that it was certain that all could not remain in power, came this thunder-clap, — this stroke of war in the midst of peace. They were the successors of the great Peace-minister, whose fame as a pacificator had spread over the world; and here was a fierce belligerent act perpetrated on an Ally, amidst declarations of peace, and probably a train of consequences to be met which there was no seeing the end of! Any power but Turkey would go to war with us on the instant. If Turkey did not, it would be only through her weakness; and the first consequence of that weakness would be that Russia would endeavor to devour her; and there again was danger of far more formidable war. While waiting to hear how the news would be received at Constantinople, it was necessary to decide at once on the countenance to be given to the admirals who had been driven to act on their own judgment. The countenance afforded them by their respective governments, in the first instance, was cordial and emphatic; and there can be little doubt that this was right. There was a position of singular difficulty; not only they acted in good concert to the best of their judgment, but no one ventured to say what they could have done better, while all deplored the event. There was a degree of chance-medley about the catastrophe which seemed to exclude the event from the scope of human control; and, in cases so out of the common course, the wisest method always is to uphold the reputation, and with it the nerve and confidence, of responsible public officers. So, from the existing government, Sir Edward Codrington received ample justice. The news of the battle arrived in London on the 10th of No-

vember; and, on the 13th, Sir Edward Codrington was gazetted as Knight-commander, and eleven of his officers as Companions of the Bath. From the Emperor of Russia and the King of France, the English admiral received thanks and high honors; and, whatever differences of opinion existed as to the treaty and the policy of the Allies towards Turkey, there was nothing heard in Parliament but praise of the officers whose charge it was to carry that policy into effect.

The difficulties which endangered the existence of the Cabinet at this time were occasioned by a discordance of principle among its members, though they took the form of a personal quarrel. Mr. Herries was unacceptable to the liberal section of the ministry; and, though he naturally supposed that, having acted with Lord Goderich before, he could act now in a Cabinet of which Lord Goderich was the head, he found that the Premier's connection with the Whigs had materially changed their relation to each other.¹ The immediate cause of quarrel was about the Finance Committee, promised by Mr. Canning, and looked forward to in the approaching session. It was time to be making arrangements for this committee, and to be agreeing upon a chairman. Lord Goderich left the affair in the hands of the ministers who sat in the Commons, concluding that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take the lead, or at least be cognizant of whatever was done. But negotiations were entered into with Lord Spencer to secure Lord Althorp for chairman, without a word being said to Mr. Herries; and it was only by accident that he learned what proceedings had been taken in the business of his own office without his knowledge. It did not gratify his feelings to find, that everybody, all round, supposed that he knew, or had forgotten to inquire whether he did or not. Either personal offence was intended, or he was too insignificant to have been the object of it; and in either case his position was intolerable. The nomination of Lord Althorp was disapproved by him; and he opposed it, stating his reasons. This was on the 29th of November. Other difficulties, many and serious, had now arisen; and, from this time till the 19th of December, the country can hardly be said to have had a government at all. Lord Goderich had formally tendered his resignation. It was clear that either Mr. Huskisson or Mr. Herries must go out: but nothing could be settled for want of a head to the Cabinet; for, of course, Lord Goderich could not act as such among his colleagues after having sent in his resignation. On or about the 20th of December, Lord Goderich was induced to withdraw his resignation; and then Mr. Herries, and, immediately after, Mr. Huskisson, placed their offices at his disposal. But Mr. Herries

¹ Hansard, xviii. 273-279.

was again forgotten or slighted. No one told him of Mr. Huskisson's offer to resign, while the Premier urged him to retain his place. As soon as he heard of Mr. Huskisson's resolution to abide by the nomination of Lord Althorp, and to go out if he could not carry that point, Mr. Herries resigned. Lord Goderich, apparently believing both these gentlemen to be absolutely essential to his government, and being unable to reconcile their differences, gave the matter up, and went to Windsor, on the 8th of January, to explain to the King that he could not go on, and to resign his office.¹

These miserable dissensions had been occupying the time and the minds of the ministers during the precious weeks which should have been employed in preparing for the approaching session of Parliament. Parliament was to have met at this very date; but, in order to afford time for the formation of a ministry, it was further prorogued to the 29th of January. During the interval of actual dissolution, Mr. Huskisson had been desired by the King to send Lord Harrowby to him. Lord Harrowby went to Windsor, but was firm in declining the premiership, on the ground of ill health. There is good reason to believe that Mr. Huskisson might have risen into Canning's seat at this time; but he was warned by his friend's fate, and decided that he had not health for the office.²

There had now been enough of mixed administrations; or the King thought so. Lord Liverpool had kept one in working-order by his weight of character, his business faculty, and the power and dignity accruing from his length of service. Mr. Canning would have kept such an administration together by the commanding power of his mind. But it was not to be supposed that any one else could be found who could bring harmony out of elements of discord; and the condition of public affairs was such as unusually to require a strong and united government. So the King sent for the strongest and most peremptory man of all; and, in spite of the Duke of Wellington's declaration not long before, that he should be mad if he ever thought of undertaking an office for which he was so little fit, he found himself, before the middle of January, 1828, Prime Minister of England.

Duke of
Wellington,
Prime Min-
ister.

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 22.

² Memoir of Huskisson, p. 145.

CHAPTER IV.

FOR a few days the old Tory party were happy. All would be well now. The King would have no more trouble about the Catholics; for they would be put down. Lord Eldon would be the person consulted by the Duke about the formation of the new ministry, and would have great influence in it, even if he should at length, at seventy-seven years of age, think himself too old for office. There would be no more talk of a balance of parties in the Cabinet; but the Duke would have his political comrades drilled into uniformity,—“a perfect machine,” as he had declared his Peninsular army to be. So people thought; but the strongest and most peremptory of men must bend like a willow-wand before the force of opinion. Opinion was now too strong for even the Duke of Wellington; and no one of these anticipations was fulfilled.

The day after the Duke received His Majesty's commands, he wrote to Lord Eldon, declaring his intention of calling on him the next day. By Lord Eldon's account, the meeting was a somewhat awkward one; the ex-chancellor evidently expecting the offer of some position in the Administration, though too old to resume his seat on the woolsack. “From the moment of his quitting me,” writes Lord Eldon, “to the appearance in the papers of all the appointments, I never saw His Grace. I had no communication with him, either personally, by note, letter, by message through any other person, or in any manner whatever: and, for the whole fortnight, I heard no more of the matter than you did; some of my colleagues in office,—and much obliged to me, too,—passing my door constantly, on their way to Apsley House, without calling upon me. In the meantime, rumor was abroad that I had refused *all* office; and this was most industriously circulated, when it was found that there was, as there really does appear to me to have been, very great dissatisfaction among very important persons on my account, as neither included in office, nor at all, not in the least, consulted. . . . However, there was a degree of discontent and anger among persons of consequence, which, I suppose, working together with its having been somehow communicated that I was much hurt at this sort of treatment, brought the Duke of Wel-

Wellington's
Administration.

lington to me again ; and the object of his visit seemed to be to account for all this. He stated, in substance, that he had found it impracticable to make any such Administration as he was sure I would be satisfied with ; and, therefore, he thought he should only be giving me unnecessary trouble in coming near me, — or to that effect.”¹ Then out came the old politician’s soreness about not having been offered the office of President of the Council ; and about being considered impracticable, which he was sure nobody had any reason to suppose ; and about having been neglected for a whole fortnight. The Duke gave as a justification for having concluded that Lord Eldon would not have approved the composition of the ministry, that it seemed as if he did not like it, now the whole was complete ; to which Lord Eldon replied, that he thought it a d——d bad one. “ We conversed together,” he continues, however, “ till, as it seemed to me, we both became a good deal affected.” They might well find themselves “ a good deal affected.” Perhaps we may feel something of it, in merely reading the record. It is sad to think of these old comrades parting off in the way they were doing now, under a control which neither of them liked, but to which the younger could wisely bend, while the elder could only fret and be angry. Agreeing in dislike of the changes in the times, they differed about how to meet them ; and the elder called the younger inconsistent, and the younger called the elder impracticable. The wedge was in, which was to split up policies and parties and friendships. It had been driven in some way now ; everybody having, by intention or mischance, lent a hand to drive it further for some time past. The Duke was the man to knock out the wedge, and make all whole again ; but, lo ! he found himself under a compulsion which permitted him no choice but to drive the wedge home, leaving our Protestant constitution, as Lord Eldon believed, shivered to fragments. Meantime, he was compelled, as others had been, to adjust a balance of political forces in the Cabinet, and to find, as if he had been a weaker man, that it was not in the power of his will to make them work. As Lord Eldon classified them, pen in hand, it came out clear before his eyes that Protestantism was in as much danger as ever. Of the thirteen, he marks six as favorers of the Catholic claims, saying, “ The other seven are as yet for Protestants, but some *very loose*. You will observe Dudley, Huskisson, Grant, Palmerston, and Lyndhurst (five), were all *Canningites*, with whom the rest were, three weeks ago, in most violent contest and opposition. These things are to me quite marvellous. How they are all to deal with each other’s conduct as to the late treaty with Turkey, and the Navarino battle, is impossible to conjecture. . . . Viscountess

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 30.

Canning has written a strong letter, as Lord Ashley tells me, to Huskisson, strongly reproaching him for joining—I use Ashley's own expression—her husband's murderers.”¹ From Mr. Huskisson's own explanations of his position, it appears that this statement concerning him is substantially true. In the first grief on his friend's loss, he uttered expressions which were certainly received as a pledge that he would never enter office in conjunction with those who had left Mr. Canning in the lurch. His words, as avowed by himself, were, “that his wounds were too green and too fresh to admit of his serving in the same Cabinet with those who had deserted the service of the country, at the time his friend's Administration was formed.”² Yet here he was now, in office under the Duke of Wellington, and by the side of Mr. Peel! We cannot wonder at the irritation of Mr. Canning's family; and we are, judging by the event, sorry that Mr. Huskisson entered this Cabinet: but we must remember the strangeness of the time, which confounded all calculations, and made sport of all consistencies. This, of itself, would guard us against a peremptory judgment; but we also know that Mr. Huskisson's acceptance of office was approved by the oldest and most valued friends of Mr. Canning.³ Still, the general feeling was, that Mr. Huskisson passed at this time under a cloud from which he never again emerged in full brightness.

It was in his former office, the colonial, that he remained; and Lord Dudley remained in the foreign office. Mr. Grant was President of the Board of Trade, and Treasurer of the Navy; and Lord Palmerston, Secretary at War. These were, what we may call, the semi-liberal members of the Administration. Mr. Herries remained, but in an office—Master of the Mint—which need not bring him again into collision with Mr. Huskisson; while Mr. Goulburn succeeded to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Mr. Peel succeeded Lord Lansdowne at the home office. Lord Lyndhurst remained chancellor, and Lord Bathurst held the office—President of the Council—which Lord Eldon had hoped to be able to accept or refuse. One of the most important appointments was that of the Marquis of Anglesey to the viceroyalty of Ireland, in the place of Lord Wellesley.

This Administration was nearly the same as that which had existed under Lord Liverpool; the only important changes being that Mr. Canning and Lord Eldon were absent, and Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Dudley present in their stead. But the men were altered. The spirit of the time had changed them; and it was no more the same government that had existed under Lord Liverpool than if it had been composed of other men.

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. 27.

² Memoir of Huskisson, p. 147.

³ Memoir of Huskisson, p. 148.

There was great eagerness throughout the country to see how much would be said in the King's speech about the great existing subjects of interest, that men might know what to expect from the new government. There was not a syllable about Ireland or the Catholic Association, and nothing about corn. There were intimations of improving prosperity at home; a recommendation to inquire diligently into financial affairs, — in other words, to appoint the proposed Finance Committee; a notification that the troops had returned from Portugal, — their appearance there having answered the purposes for which they were sent; and about half the speech related to affairs in the East. One paragraph supplied matter of debate in both Houses, and of party offence, for some time after; and there are persons who have not got over it to this day. The paragraph was this: "Notwithstanding the valor displayed by the combined fleet, His Majesty deeply laments that this conflict [of Navarino] should have occurred with the naval force of an ancient ally; but he still entertains a confident hope, that this untoward event will not be followed by further hostilities, and will not impede that amicable adjustment of the existing differences between the Porte and the Greeks, to which it is so manifestly their common interest to accede."¹ Few words have excited more debate or more passion in their time than this word "untoward." To us, after the lapse of years, it seems a simple affair enough, — this application of the word "untoward" to an event which, originating in a sort of accident, ought to have involved us in war with Turkey, and might have brought us into collision with Russia. But the word was hardly looked upon at all with simplicity, as in cases where no passion is concerned. The late Administration regarded it as implying censure on their policy; and the officers in the Mediterranean, as impeaching their judgment, and the more on account of the compliment to their valor. According to some, Russia was made suspicious. According to others, France was made angry. In short, it was a season when all men were on the watch for symptoms, and when many were implicated in great public affairs on new and doubtful grounds; and, in such circumstances, a single word may become the rallying-point of a whole rabble of passions. The observer of those times is curious to know whether the framers of the speech would have changed the word or the paragraph, if they could have foreseen the excitement that would ensue; and whether they could have found any other expression that would have conveyed their meaning with less offence.

At home, the whole affair ended in debate. There were motions for explanations, and to obtain the thanks of Parliament

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 23.

for the British officers engaged at Navarino, — motions which were withdrawn when the objects of debate were accomplished; but there was no war. Russia was quite willing to undertake that part of the consequences of the “untoward event;” and the Porte had enough to do to cope with Russia, without insisting on war with England and France. The Porte.

On the departure of the ambassadors from Constantinople, on the 8th of December, the Turkish Government protested against the resident Christians being put under the protection of the Netherlands ambassador, and claimed the office of protector for itself. Four days after the departure of the Russian ambassador, the Turkish vizier wrote to the Russian Minister a remonstrance against the act, as one apparently unauthorized by either government, and likely to convey a false impression of the hostile disposition of the Porte. To this no answer was returned. Three weeks afterwards, — just at the time when Lord Goderich was going out, — a document, sent by the vizier to all the governors of provinces in the Turkish dominions, was made public, which revealed the whole state of the case. The Turkish government made great complaint of the publication of this document, and insisted upon its being regarded as a mere letter of private instructions, addressed to its own servants. The world had nothing to do with the mode in which it had got abroad. The contents were what other powers had concern with; and these were such as to put an end to all disguise, and render further duplicity needless.¹ This document declared, that the coming war was, under political pretences, a religious war; that the Christian powers desired to place the infidels over the heads of the faithful in all countries where they lived intermingled, in order to overthrow the institutions of the prophet; that all the negotiations which had been entered into, all the humility towards the Christian powers, all the apparent apathy about the loss of the fleet at Navarino, had been merely for the purpose of gaining time for military preparations; and that it was needless to explain, that, in the cause of Islamism, there was no obligation to keep faith with infidels; that it was of the utmost consequence to defer the outbreak of war till the summer approached; and that every art had been employed, and would be employed, to protract the negotiations till that time; and that, meanwhile, every effort must be used by the officers of the empire to make the people understand that this was a holy war, in which failure was a misfortune too great to be contemplated, as not only would the faithful and the infidels be made to exchange social positions, but the mosques would be converted into churches, and perhaps profaned by the sound of bells. “Let the faithful, then,” this

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 222.

document concluded, "have no thought of their arrears, or of pay of any kind. Let us sacrifice willingly our properties and our persons, and struggle, body and soul, for the support of our religion. The worshippers of the prophet have no other means of working out their salvation in this world and the next." After this, there could be no doubt of what would happen; and preparations for war went on in both countries. In this same month of January, lists were made of the Christians resident in Constantinople; and they were ordered off, with very few exceptions. Even the Armenians, subjects of the Porte, were treated like the foreign merchants, or worse. Some of the most respectable were put into prison, and about twelve thousand were banished.¹ The Bosphorus was closed; and the corn in the vessels of any nation, then in harbor, was seized. Reinforcements were sent to the fortresses on the Danube; and a great camp was formed near Adrianople. The loss of the fleet was a terrible misfortune, as it left Russia mistress of the Black Sea; but all that could be done was done, in the interval before April, when the emperor formally declared war against the Porte. Thus stood matters six months after the battle of Navarino. No terms had been obtained for the Greeks; and, if there was some respite and impunity for them, it was obtained only by the approach of that Russian war with the Porte which it had been a chief object with England and France to control, by joining in the Treaty of London.

The Finance Committee, which had been the occasion of the misunderstandings in Lord Goderich's Cabinet, was moved for by Mr. Peel on the 15th of February, and voted for almost unanimously. It consisted of twenty-three members, of whom two were Mr. Herries and Mr. Huskisson.² The latter begged at first to be excused, on account of the pressure of business in his own office; but the wish for his presence in committee was so strong and general that he yielded. The report of this committee was delivered in too late to admit of many of its recommendations being immediately adopted; but one discovery which it made very early caused the speedy passage of a short Bill, to suspend the Act for granting government life-annuities till a better basis should have been found for the calculations of the duration of life. When Mr. Perceval brought in, in 1808, his Bill authorizing the sale of these annuities, the calculations were based on Dr. Price's tables. Whether these tables were originally inaccurate, or whether the duration of human life had improved since they were framed, they were certainly now causing the government annuities to be sold too low. There also was some curious speculation going forward, against

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 223.

² Hansard, xviii. p. 446.

which no Minister could be expected to be on his guard, till warned by experience. Speculators bought annuities on the lives of persons whose chances of longevity were unusually strong. On careful inquiry, it appeared to these speculators, that the most long-lived class of men is that of Scotch gardeners; and many were the hale Scotch gardeners picked out, and, for a consideration, made government annuitants. It had occurred to Mr. Finlaison that some national loss was sustained through these annuities; and he entered into calculations which proved to him that the loss was great.¹ He went to Lord Bexley in 1819, and told him his views; and he was directed to prosecute his inquiries. Now, on looking to the outstanding annuities, Mr. Finlaison calculated that the rate of mortality, instead of being one in forty, was only one in fifty-six, and that the average of female life especially was much longer than had been supposed. The loss to the public was estimated at 95,000*l.* a year; nearly 8000*l.* a month. Nothing could be done with the sales which had been actually made; but, by the Act now quickly passed, the process was to be stopped till better terms were provided.²

When the estimates were brought forward, it was proposed to grant a pension of 3000*l.* a year to Mr. Canning's family, in the person of one of his sons. Mr. Canning had, as every one knew, no private fortune. He would have become ^{Pension to Mr. Canning's family.} wealthy in India; and, if he was kept at home for the public service, it was clearly the duty of the public, whom he served to the sacrifice of wealth, to see that his family did not suffer from poverty. He had held no sinecures, and had received nothing but the salary of the offices he filled. There had been no time to lay by a provision for his family, even if his income had admitted of such accumulation; and his death was sudden and untimely. It appears a clear case enough; one in which there could be but one opinion and one voice. The sum proposed to be granted to Mr. Canning's son was from a special fund, to which his father would have become entitled, if he had lived to the expiration of two years from his entrance upon his last office. Reasonable as the claim and the method appear to be, and as they appeared to most persons at the time, so strong an opposition was raised that the matter was twice debated at great length. The objections were, some on the score of economy; some on that of the mischief of the precedent; and many more on that of dissatisfaction with Mr. Canning's policy. It is impossible to avoid supposing, that the opposition arose mainly from the feelings which, a year ago, had been brought to bear upon Mr. Canning himself, and which the events of the interval had not calmed down or chastened. There was but too little

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 71.

² Hansard, xix. p. 683.

improvement visible in the tone of some who might have learned moderation from the affecting lessons of the preceding months. The opposition consisted of 54 in a House of 216. Mr. Banks perhaps went further than any one else, when he proposed to charge to Mr. Canning the expenses of the battle of Navarino, and of the Mediterranean fleet in connection with it. The Ministers were eager to promote the grant, — one and all, — and the more eager, perhaps, for the doubtful or hostile terms on which they had been latterly with the departed statesman; and the economists among them could be as hearty as the rest, without drawback, as they could show that this pension would involve no charge to the country. It was merely the transference of a sum from an existing fund to Mr. Canning's son, in lieu of his father, who must have had it, if he had lived. It was for the lives of both sons that the pension was granted, as the elder was in the navy, and thereby exposed to many casualties. Five months afterwards, he was drowned in bathing at Madeira, — died in the reservoir into which he plunged after being extremely heated by exercise.¹ He was a post-captain in the navy; and fresh sympathy was awakened towards the family when its new representative came to this mournful and untimely end.

The great interest of the session was the debate and division on the proposed repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. Lord John Russell moved, on the 26th of February, that there should be a committee of the whole House to consider of these Acts.² In his speech, he gave the history of the Acts, clearly showing that they bore no relation to present times and circumstances, but to some long past and widely different. The Dissenters might be, or appear, dangerous to the House of Stuart; but they were certainly loyal subjects of the House of Hanover, and did not deserve to be excluded from civil office by the Corporation Act: and, as to the Test Act, it was originally intended as a barrier to the Church against the King, who was a converted papist. The circumstances were antiquated, and so were the restrictions; and it was time, for the credit of English understandings, that they should be repealed. The disqualifications of Dissenters were presented very forcibly to the House, by a succession of speakers, and seen at once to be both disgraceful, and in other ways injurious. The government opposition was conducted by Mr. Peel and Mr. Huskisson. It was not surprising in those days, however it might be now, that Mr. Peel was on the side of old fashion and orthodox assumption; but that Mr. Huskisson should appear in behalf of intolerance and injury for opinion, was mortifying to those who appreciated him most. Both, however, were as feeble as the

Repeal of
Dissenters'
Disabilities.

¹ Annual Register, Chron., p. 263.

² Hansard, xviii. p. 676.

friends of religious liberty could desire: their ground was the narrowest and the most temporary that could be held, and it was taken solely because there was no other. Both admitted the principles involved in Lord John Russell's motion and speech: but Mr. Peel argued that the Dissenters did not really suffer, as they were incessantly relieved by Indemnity Bills; and Mr. Huskisson feared injury to the Catholic cause by releasing the Dissenters from a condition of disability which kept them vigilant on the subject of the rights of conscience, and from the insult that it would be to the Catholics to release others from disabilities while theirs remained. The House decided in favor of the committee by a majority of 44 in a House of 430.¹ Mr. Peel had, happily, declared his belief, that the existence of the Church of England was not bound up with these restrictions; so he could give up the contest, and bow to the will of Parliament, without such struggles and agonies as those of Lord Eldon and others, who believed that all was over now with the true Protestant religion in our country.

The question arising, What was the government now to do? it was a matter of importance to decide whether the rejection of the expected Bill should be secured in the Upper House, or whether government should provide such securities, to be attached to the Bill, as might make it least objectionable. This last course was decided on,—the will of the Commons being so declared as to make the thought of opposition too hazardous. After the Bill had been read twice, and when the House was about to go into committee, Mr. Sturges Bourne proposed the substitution of a declaration for the sacramental test,—a declaration of the person entering upon office, that he would not use any of the powers or influence of his office for the subversion of the Established Church.² And, as there would be some absurdity in regarding such a declaration from officials in the service of the Crown, another clause was proposed, which rendered it optional with the Crown to require or omit the declaration. There was nothing in the first of these proposals to which the Dissenters could object so seriously as to endanger the Bill, as they had no thought of taking office for the purpose of injuring the Church, but only for the sake of doing the duties and enjoying the rights of equal citizenship; and they were pleased at the second clause, because it left open a probability that the declaration itself—the last badge of difference on account of their religious opinions—would fall into disuse. They therefore contented themselves with protesting, through their advocates in the House, against the imposition of any badge whatever; and pushed their Bill.³ When it arrived

¹ Hansard, xviii. p. 781.

² Hansard, xviii. p. 1183.

³ Hansard, xviii. p. 1502.

in the Upper House, the Duke of Wellington spoke in its favor, saying that the only reason why the government had at first opposed it in the Commons was that the system had appeared to work well hitherto; but, as it was clear that the Commons thought the time was come for a change, and as the principle of the old exclusion or opprobrium was not in itself defensible, he now thought it the duty of the peers to pass the Bill, if they were satisfied, as he was, that the declaration afforded sufficient security against injury to the Established Church. Thus was it regarded by government, and by some of the spiritual peers; the Archbishop of York, and the Bishops of Lincoln, Durham, and Chester, speaking in favor of the Bill. "We who oppose," says Lord Eldon,¹ "shall be in but a wretched minority, though the individuals who compose it will, as to several, I think, be of the most respectable class of peers; but the Administration have—to their shame be it said—got the archbishops and most of the bishops to support this revolutionary Bill." Again: "All the Whig lords will be against us; as government began in the Commons by opposition, and then ran away like a parcel of cowards, I suppose government also will be against us; but what is most calamitous of all is, that the archbishops and several bishops are also against us. What they can mean, they best know, for nobody else can tell; and, sooner or later, perhaps in this very year,—almost certainly in the next,—the concessions to the Dissenters must be followed by the like concessions to the Roman Catholics. That seems unavoidable; though, at present, the policy is to conceal this additional purpose." We should like now to know how many influential members of both Houses entertained this expectation, at this date of April, 1828. On the 12th of the month, the Chancellor again writes: "We, as we think ourselves, sincere friends of the Church of England, mean to fight, as well as we can, on Thursday next, against this most shameful Bill in favor of the Dissenters, which has been sent up to us from the Commons,—a bill which Peel's declaration in the House, as to the probability of its passing in the Lords, has made it impossible to resist with effect. . . . If the Lords won't at least alter it, which I don't believe they will, I don't see how, if the Commons act consistently with themselves, Sir F. Burdett can fail in his motion, on the 29th, in favor of the Roman Catholics. The state of minds and feelings in the Tory part and aristocratical part of the friends of Liverpool's Administration is, at present, excessively feverish; and they support ministers, because they know not where to look for others. It is obvious, that the ministers who were Canning's followers, to use a vulgar phrase, rule the roast, or at least have too much influence." In his speeches,

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 37, 38.

Lord Eldon declared his principle broadly; and he was so angry with the bishops, and so pertinacious with his amendments, that it is clear that he considered this measure of the last importance, from its involving release from all religious disabilities, as well as those of Protestant Dissenters. He said: "The constitution required that the Church of England should be supported; and the best way of affording that support to her was to admit only her own members to offices of trust and emolument." Most people thought, by this time, that Lord Eldon's method was likely to be fatal to the Church, by inflicting injury and indignity on nearly half the population of Great Britain and Ireland; for to that number did Protestant Dissenters, Catholics, and Jews, now amount. Lord Eldon¹ declared, "that, if he stood alone, he would go below the bar, and vote against the Bill; and, were he called that night to render his account before Heaven, he would go with the consoling reflection, that he had never advocated any thing mischievous to his country." The Lords would not receive his proposed amendments; and he was very unhappy, — "hurt, distressed, and fatigued," he declares, "by what has lately been passing in the House of Lords. I have fought like a lion, but my talons have been cut off."

Such amendments as the Lords did pass were called "poor things" by the old Earl; but there was one whose practical bearing would have gratified his bigotry, if he could have foreseen it. It would have solaced him to know, that the principle of exclusion from offices of citizenship for religious opinion was to be extended and perpetuated by a sort of accident. The Bishop of Llandaff proposed to add to the declaration a few words expressive of belief in Christianity. This was in consequence of a hint from Lord Harewood; not because he supposed it necessary, but merely decorous. He proposed it "for the credit of Parliament."² These words were: "On the true faith of a Christian." By the carrying of this clause, the Jews have since been excluded from offices which they were before competent to hold. This was not the first time that the Jews were unintentionally wronged by measures proposed to affect a different party. As Lord Holland informed the House, there was nothing to keep Jews out of Parliament since the reign of Charles II., except the abjuration oath, which was introduced into the Toleration Act, — the Act brought in against the adherents of the House of Stuart.³ And now they were again excluded — freshly wronged — by words which were imposed, not for any purpose of necessity, but for the credit of Parliament! However much a subject of regret, it is not one of surprise to those who have experimental

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 42.

² Hansard, xviii. p. 1585.

³ Hansard, xix. p. 158.

knowledge of the operation of laws restrictive on opinion. The principle of mutual judgment for matters of opinion, and of legislative partiality for opinion, is so radically unjust and mischievous, that it ought to be no matter of surprise if the injury spread beyond its designed bounds, and the tyranny works out retributive consequences. Lord Holland entered his protest against these words on the journals of the House: "Because the introduction of the words, 'upon the true faith of a Christian,' implies an opinion in which I cannot conscientiously concur; namely, that a particular faith in matters of religion is necessary to the proper discharge of duties purely political or temporal."¹ And also because it had been found, in preceding cases, that a suspension of this clause had taken place in regard to persons not contemplated in the imposition of the declaration. The amendments of the Lords were agreed to by the Commons; and, in the beginning of May, the Bill, which, in its finished state, Lord Eldon characterized as being, in his "poor judgment, as bad, as mischievous, and as revolutionary, as the most captious Dissenter would wish it to be," received the royal assent. Lord Eldon's only idea of a Dissenter was, that he was a captious and revolutionary man, always bent upon the destruction of the Church of England; and, this being the image in his eye, we may pity him for the terror of his soul. A wiser man, who knew something of Dissenters, and of their strong resemblance to other men, felt happier on the occasion.² Lord Holland said, that, in performing the pleasing duty of moving "that this Bill do pass," he could not refrain from expressing his feeling in language both of gratitude and congratulation, — gratitude to the House, for the manner in which it had discharged its duty to the country, and congratulation to the country upon the achievement of so glorious a result.

This was universally considered the great measure of the session, — the great achievement of the year; and it was no small achievement to have obtained an equal position of citizenship for as loyal and peaceable and principled a set of men as any in the kingdom. The credit is due, not to either the aristocratic or the liberal section of rulers and their adherents, but to the liberal members of each House unconnected with government. Government yielded only when it could not resist. And now men looked anxiously to see what would be done about the Catholics, after this practical protest against exclusion from office on account of religious opinion.

¹ Hansard, xix. p. 49.

² Hansard, xix. p. 186.

CHAPTER V.

MORE dissensions in the Cabinet! There had been rumors about hidden troubles there as early as March; and when the Corn Bill was brought forward, on the 31st of that month, it became clear that there had been difficulties among its framers. It could hardly be otherwise when Mr. Huskisson was necessarily the chief authority in the matter, and the Duke of Wellington, who had thrown out the Bill of the preceding year, was the head of the government. His principle of prohibition was disavowed by the government in regard to the present Bill. The measure was declared to be in principle exactly that of last session; but the duties proposed were higher. It was generally understood, that the Premier had met with a firmer adherence to Mr. Canning's measure than he expected among his colleagues; and he yielded, — as he had now become practised in doing. He had yielded to the expediency of taking the premiership, after openly declaring that he should be mad if he ever did such a thing. He had yielded to the necessity of forming a mixed Cabinet, when the King had hoped to have a united one by placing him at the head. He had yielded the emancipation of the Dissenters, and he now yielded his own particular objection to the Corn Bill. Truly, it was now evidently too late to look for the old-fashioned "consistency" which had been formerly the first requisite in statesmanship. If it was not to be found in the honest, resolute, imperious Wellington, it need not be looked for anywhere; or, rather, it must be admitted, that consistency meant now something different from what it used to mean. The Duke went, with a good grace, through the process of bringing forward the government Corn Bill, destitute of the provision which he had thought indispensable a year before, and of any substitute for it; and his liberal colleagues did not pretend to approve of the higher rate of duties. It was a compromise throughout. The agricultural interest complained of the absence of all prohibitory provisions; and other interests complained of the duties, and of the point at which they were fixed, — the pivot-point from which ascent and descent of duties began; which they conceived to be virtually raised from 60s. to 64s. by the increased duties

charged on the intervening prices. But the Bill passed on the 26th of June.¹ Mr. Huskisson made no secret of his opinions on the corn-laws. He condemned them in themselves, but thought they could not be abolished in the existing state of affairs. "However expedient to prevent other evils, in the present state of the country," he said, "they are in themselves a burden and a restraint upon its manufacturing and commercial industry."² The Cabinet compromise appearing to be successful as far as this Bill was concerned, it was supposed that the disagreements in the government were surmounted, and that all might now go on smoothly. But it was not to be.

There had been in February a serious call for explanations from the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Huskisson, about some expressions of the latter, uttered to his constituents at Liverpool on his late re-election; and both made these explanations in Parliament. Mr. Huskisson was reported to have said on the hustings, that he did not enter upon office under the Duke, without having obtained from him guarantees that Mr. Canning's policy would be followed out. The Duke, of course, rejected with scorn the idea that any gentleman would propose to him any guarantee of the sort; or that he could for an instant listen to such a proposal.³ "Is it to be supposed," said the Duke, "that the right honorable gentleman to whom I suppose the noble earl to allude, could have used the expressions ascribed to him at the Liverpool election? If my right honorable friend had entered into any such corrupt bargain as he was represented to describe, he would have tarnished his own fame, as much as I should have disgraced mine. It is much more probable, — though I have not thought it worth my while to ask for any explanation on the subject, — that my right honorable friend stated, not that he had concluded any wholesale bargain with me, but that the men of whom the government is now composed are in themselves a guarantee to the public, that their measures will be such as will be conducive to His Majesty's honor and interests, and to the happiness of the people." And Mr. Huskisson, supported by abundance of needless testimony, declared that this was nearly what he did mean and say; namely, that in the composition of the Cabinet would be found a sufficient guarantee for the carrying out of a liberal policy.⁴ Still, though this matter was cleared up, affairs did not work easily; and a disruption of the Cabinet took place in May, — the immediate occasion being a misunderstanding between the same two members of the government.

Mr. Huskisson's popularity was somewhat declining. He had lost some of the sympathy of the country by re-entering office

¹ Hansard, xix. p. 1524.

³ Hansard, xviii. p. 286.

² Memoir of Huskisson, p. 167.

⁴ Hansard, xviii. p. 481.

with Mr. Canning's enemies; and when it was seen with what different ministries he could sit in Cabinet, and how, among many changes, he, the bosom friend of Canning, could abide in office, the old sneer — of his being a "political adventurer" — was revived, with perhaps greater effect than in a more aristocratic time. The events of this month of May damaged his reputation seriously; and he never, during the short remainder of his life, got over it. Those who knew him well, and those who, not knowing him, were duly sensible of the compass and value of his policy, understood his feelings so as to acquit him of every thing morally wrong, — of every thing in the least questionable about personal honor, — of every thing but uncertainty and error of judgment; but they could not complain of the world in general for forming a somewhat severer judgment. Those who knew the man understood his sensitiveness about responsibility, — his timidity about breaking up the government of the country on account of difficulties of his own. And those who appreciated the importance of his free-trade policy — the charge of which he could not depute to any one till some were educated up to his point — could well understand that he would bear with much, and hesitate long, before he would vacate a position in which alone he could effectually promote that policy. He seems indeed to have lingered too long; and to have mismanaged his method of retiring, so as to have made his secession look too much like an expulsion from the Cabinet: but those who knew his state of health, his need and desire of rest and travel, and his suffering in public life since the death of his friend, were well aware that his self-regards would have led him into private life long before. We cannot doubt that he often wished that he had followed his inclinations. Many and many a time within the last eight months must he have wished that he had resisted the desire of the King and Lord Goderich, and, seeing more clearly than they, remained abroad; and from this time, — this May, 1828, — he could have had few but bitter thoughts connected with the last stages of his public career. His final ministerial struggle is a strange instance of strong impulse followed by infirmity of purpose.

Bills were brought into Parliament to disfranchise the boroughs of Penryn and East Retford; the movers, Lord John Russell and Mr. Tennyson, proposing to transfer the ^{East-Retford Bill.} franchise to Manchester and Birmingham.¹ About the disposal of the franchise there were two opinions: one, that it should be given to the neighboring hundreds; the other, that it should be transferred to populous towns. Mr. Peel, whose opinion was the most important in the House, had declared, that, if there were

¹ Hansard, xviii. p. 83.

two boroughs to dispose of, he should advocate the transference in one case to a town, and in the other to the neighboring hundreds. Mr. Huskisson had declared, that, if there were but one, he should be for giving it to a town. The Penryn case was first sent up to the Lords, and the East-Retford case was discussed in the Commons, on the 19th of May, under a persuasion on the part of the government that the Penryn Bill would be thrown out by the Lords; so that there would be only one borough to deal with. Here arose the ministerial difficulty. The government opposed, through Mr. Peel, the transference of the franchise to Birmingham, while Mr. Huskisson felt himself bound by his previous declaration to vote for that transference. Lord Sandon expressly claimed his vote on this ground; and he did not see how he could refuse it: though some suggested that he might avoid voting against his colleagues, on the pretext that the House of Lords had not yet decided on the Penryn Bill.¹ Mr. Huskisson himself earnestly wished for an adjournment of the subject, that Mr. Peel and himself might have an opportunity of coming to some understanding; but he could not carry this point; and he voted against his colleagues. At the moment, he did not see that he could remain in office; or, at least, that he could avoid offering to resign. He went home, at two o'clock in the morning, with the buzz of the excited House in his ears, and the significant countenances of colleagues and opponents before his eyes; exhausted with fatigue after sixteen hours' attention to business;² feeble in health and sick at heart; and, instead of waiting for the morrow to consider, when refreshed and composed, what he should do, he sat down, and wrote to the Duke of Wellington a letter which was intended by Mr. Huskisson to be an offer to resign, but understood by the Duke to be an actual and formal resignation. The Duke received the letter before ten the next morning, — was surprised, — did not think the superscription, "private and confidential," had any bearing on the purport of the letter, and made all haste to lay it before the King as a formal resignation.³ Friend after friend went to him, on Mr. Huskisson's behalf; but the Duke would acknowledge no mistake or undue haste on his own part. Mr. Huskisson wrote one explanatory letter after another: but still the Duke declared the resignation to have been positive; and if so, and if the Duke wished it to be irrevocable, it was irrevocable. The truth plainly was, that Mr. Huskisson was first mistaken in his estimate of the fatal character of his vote; next, hasty in writing to the Duke under exhaustion and perturbation, though his impulse was worthy and honorable; and, finally, too

Mr. Huskisson's resignation.

¹ Hansard, xix, p. 808.

² Hansard, xix, pp. 924-938.

³ Hansard, xix, p. 928.

slow to accept the consequences of his own act. The Duke was clearly less anxious about a disruption of his Cabinet than pleased at the occurrence of a fair opportunity to dismiss "the Canningites." He offered one option to Mr. Huskisson,—to withdraw his letter; but, as that act would have stultified the writer in regard to all his subsequent explanations, it could not, of course, be thought of. After a miserable series of negotiations, explanations, remonstrances, accidents, and mistakes, so many as to suggest an idea of fatality, Mr. Huskisson's office was filled up on the 25th of May. Painfully as he had shrunk from the risk of disturbing the government, lest the country should lose the benefit of a continuance of Mr. Canning's policy, Mr. Huskisson was now compelled to witness, as a consequence of that little letter of his, the retirement of all "the Canningites."¹ Lord Palmerston, Lord Dudley, Mr. Lamb (afterwards Lord Melbourne), and Mr. Grant resigned; and were succeeded by Sir Henry Hardinge, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Francis Egerton, and Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald. Mr. Huskisson's place was filled by Sir George Murray.

At last, here was a Cabinet such as the King desired, and had hoped to have in January,—a Cabinet in which the Changes in the Cabinet. affairs of the country could be managed as in old days, and on good old principles. Were the King and the Duke happy at last?

The King could not much enjoy any thing at present. In the preceding year, Lord Eldon had remarked a serious decline in his health; and he did not seem to be rallying. His state of health and nerve, of temper and spirits, enhanced the difficulties of his ministers, which were serious enough without that addition. Lord Eldon² declared, a few days after Mr. Huskisson's retirement: "The Minister will have great difficulties to struggle with. The Whigs, the Canningites, and the Huskissonites, will join, and be very strong. With the exception of Lord Lonsdale, the great Tory parliamentary lords are not propitiated by the new arrangements, and many of them will be either neuter or adverse." But a more serious difficulty was arising than any caused by this phalanx of foes.

In the debate on the Dissenters' Bill, the Duke had said, while showing how unconnected he conceived this Bill to be Catholic Question. with the Catholic cause, "There is no person in this House whose feelings and sentiments, after long consideration, are more decided than mine are with regard to the subject of the Roman-Catholic claims; and, until I see a great change in that question, I certainly shall oppose it."³ Recently as this had been

¹ Annual Register, 1828, Chron. 191.

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 48.

³ Annual Register, 1828, p. 104.

said, there was already "a great change." The Duke had not yet, perhaps, done yielding. It was a pity he had not yet learned to refrain from engaging for future states of his mind.

On the 8th of May, after the passing of the Dissenters' bills, and before the resignation of Mr. Huskisson and his liberal colleagues, the Catholic question was brought forward by Sir F. Burdett.¹ The debate, which occupied three evenings, ended with the adoption of a resolution, that it was expedient to consider the state of the laws affecting Roman Catholics, in order to such an adjustment as might be satisfactory to all parties. There was now a majority of six, where in the preceding session there had been a minority of four. It was thought advisable, considering the excitement caused by every movement on this question, to learn, before going further, what the Lords were likely to do; and a conference took place on the 19th, when the managers for the peers received the resolution of the Commons.² The 9th of June was the day appointed for the consideration of the resolution. Before that day arrived, a "great change" took place, which produced an immediate effect on the tone of the Duke of Wellington.

During Mr. Canning's short Administration, the Catholics had been very quiet. The Premier was their friend, and a powerful one. During Lord Goderich's short Administration, they had been suspicious and restless. The Premier was their friend, but he was a powerless one. When the Duke of Wellington assumed office, they became violent; for then the Premier was their enemy. O'Connell boasted that no law should or could put down the Catholic Association; and it was, in fact, as active as ever. Their success in such of the elections as they had carried,—a great success following upon a sudden thought, without any preparation or previous consultation,—had taught them what to do next, by showing them what a vast electoral power they held in their command of "the forties," as O'Connell called the forty-shilling freeholders. Vigorous preparations were made for the next general election. Missionaries were sent out to rouse and instruct the forties throughout Ireland; the priests gave all their influence to the cause; and O'Connell spent his days in abusing the Duke of Wellington, and exciting hatred towards England. The exasperation of the landlords of the forties was extreme. They found the priests and the great Catholic leader everywhere, interfering with their tenantry, and rousing the ignorant population of their estates to what they called "insubordination." Till now, it was a thing unheard of, that the tenantry of a landed proprietor should not vote as his landlord desired. To obtain their votes, the proprietors had cut up their lands into forty-

¹ Hansard, xix. p. 375.

² Hansard, xix. p. 767.

shilling freeholds, and had covered their estates with an indigent population; and now, this political power, for which they had sacrificed every thing,—including the welfare of the indigent tenantry themselves,—was turned against them by the priests and the agents of the Association. The enmity was so fierce, and the mutual injuries so exasperating, that it seemed as if a dissolution of society must take place. While the Tory peers were fearing for the Church and the purity of the constitution, if the Catholics were emancipated, men of wider views saw that society itself must fall to pieces in Ireland if they were not. It was in the midst of this state of things, and before the Lords had debated the Catholic question for this year, that Mr. Huskisson and his colleagues went out; and some new elections must take place on the assumption of office by their successors.

Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, who represented the county of Clare, was the successor of Mr. Grant, as President of the Clare election. Board of Trade. He was in favor of the Catholic claims; and neither he, nor any one else in England, doubted his being returned, as a matter of course, with the hearty goodwill of the Catholics. But the Catholics seized the opportunity of bringing their cause to a crisis. Their leaders resolved that Mr. O'Connell should be elected; and the thing was done with a high hand.¹ The Catholics in London held a meeting, and subscribed funds; and the Catholic rent in Ireland yielded what else was wanted. The Irish people, though extremely docile to their leaders, were, to the lowest of the forties, too acute not to see that there was little use in electing a representative who could not sit; and it was not enough for them that O'Connell declared, on his reputation as a lawyer, that there was nothing in the existing law which prevented his being elected. This was clear, of course, but not sufficient; so he proceeded to pronounce that he could sit in Parliament, and vote, without taking the oaths. The acute Irish naturally wondered what, in that case, became of their grievance of being unrepresented, and why O'Connell had not been there all this time. But Mr. O'Connell was not the only lawyer who avowed that opinion. Mr. Butler, an English Catholic barrister, published at this time a similar opinion, with the grounds assigned. So the electors thought they would try.

The excitement was prodigious. In every corner of the county of Clare, there was such preaching and haranguing, that, to a spectator, it looked more like a crusade than an election. As one of their patriots, Mr. Shiel, afterwards said, "Every altar was a tribune." If an orator arrived in the dead of the night, he had a crowd about him in five minutes. It was not all joyous excitement. There was misery enough in the midst of it; for the

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 123.

people were between two fires. They had their religion on the one hand, with all its awful threats, and their landlords on the other; for almost every landlord in the county exerted himself for Mr. Fitzgerald, and strove to engage his tenantry on the same side. In a position of such difficulty, the people had, naturally, recourse to their priests for guidance; and this decided the struggle, and left the landlords powerless.

The 30th of June was the day fixed for the polling; and, in the meantime, while this extraordinary electioneering was fixing the attention of all men, the Catholic debate came on in the Lords. By a shrewd and quiet passage in a speech of Lord Eldon's,¹ we learn that the electioneering of the Catholics was in the minds of the peers during the debate. What Lord Eldon "wished particularly to notice on this occasion was a recent proscription, by their chief orator, of twenty-eight county and borough members. From the tone of confidence in which the speaker calculated on removing those obnoxious representatives, it appeared that the Roman Catholics had already sufficient elective power in their hands, and ought not to require that it should be increased." The interest of the debate lay in the speech of the Duke of Wellington. Amidst declarations of his sense of the difficulty and danger of making alterations, he impressed almost everybody with the idea that he saw yet more danger in making no changes. His complaints of the present agitation of the subject were chiefly on the ground, that it prevented such consultation and mutual understanding as might take place if people's minds were at rest. The concluding words are remarkable now, as showing how a man, who considered himself eminently practical, could set his mind, and well-nigh stake his statesmanship, on impossibilities; and they were felt to be so remarkable at the time for what they foreboded, that they were repeated everywhere as a cause for either hope or dread. He said:²—

"There is also one fact respecting the state of things in Ireland, to which I should wish to call your lordships' attention. From 1781 to 1791, during which many troublesome questions with respect to that country were discussed, the Roman-Catholic question was in fact never heard of; and so little was the question thought about, that when my noble and learned friend (Lord Redesdale) brought into the House of Commons, at that period, a Bill respecting the Roman Catholics of England, it is a remarkable fact that the then Lord-lieutenant of Ireland was not only not consulted on the subject, but actually did not know of it until the Bill was brought into Parliament. So little did the Catholics of Ireland disturb the public mind at that moment, that the ques-

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 52.

² Hansard, xix. p. 1291.

tion was allowed to pass quietly by, almost without comment. If the public mind was now suffered to be thus tranquil,—if the agitators of Ireland would only leave the public mind at rest,—the people would become more satisfied, and I certainly think it would then be possible to do something.”

This, if not very wise, appeared significant. People smiled at the idea of going back now, voluntarily, into the indifference of a past time,—of pouring back the lava streams into the crater of the volcano; but they saw that the more this was found to be out of the question, the more inevitably would the ruling powers discover it to be “possible to do something.” We find, accordingly, in a letter of Lord Eldon’s,¹ written soon afterwards, “O’Connell’s proceedings in Ireland, which you will see in the papers, and the supposed or real ambiguity which marked the Duke of Wellington’s speech, have led to a very general persuasion, that Ministry intend, or at least that the Duke intends, next session, to emancipate the Roman Catholics, as he has the Dissenters; and the world is uneasy.

The Clare election came on. Bands of the forties were marched into Ennis, the county-town, under the leadership of priests, and with the watchword, “For God and O’Connell!” the most intelligible expression to them of the adjuration, “For God and our right!”² Mr. Fitzgerald reasoned; Mr. O’Connell declaimed and bullied, using on the hustings language so insufferable, as to make the gentry of the county wonder what sort of an appearance he would make in Parliament, if he should really ever get there. After a few days’ polling, it was evident that Mr. Fitzgerald had no chance; and he withdrew. A protest against Mr. O’Connell’s election, as illegal, was offered; and the matter was argued by counsel before the sheriff and his assessor. It was, of course, decided that the election was legal, the difficulty of admission to Parliament consisting only in the nature of the oaths to be tendered to the representative on his presenting himself in the House. No one could take upon himself to say beforehand, that any man would not take the oaths. Mr. O’Connell was therefore returned, as elected by a majority of qualified freeholders; but the circumstances of the contest—a notification of the religion of each candidate, and of the presentation of the protest—were stated on the face of the return. A petition against his return was immediately presented to the House of Commons; but the session was nearly over, and nothing was done in regard to it.³ O’Connell was well pleased at this, as the recess was before him, for agitation in his new character of member of Parliament; for as such he was exten-

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 55.

² Annual Register, 1828, p. 126.

³ Annual Register, 1828, p. 129.

sively regarded in Ireland. He now gave out, that Catholic representatives must be elected, as occasion offered, for all the counties of Ireland. The Catholic Association pushed its preparations for this great effort; and it began by taking under its protection such of the forties as had been ejected, or distrained upon for rent by their landlords, in consequence of their votes at the late election. Thus far the Association had acted in wary evasion of the Suppression Act. That Act expired in July; and the Association immediately afterwards met, with an ostentation of defiance, to discuss and push their measures. They could not be touched now till the next session; and the intervening months were diligently used. Many of the English Dissenters took part with them, subscribing funds for the Clare election, and preparing to aid them further by the use of their nonconformist organization.

Mr. O'Connell did not bring the question of his eligibility for Parliament to an issue this session. His enemies said it was "manifest that he could do more mischief by prolonging his existence as a pretended M.P., than he could do if he was now to appear, and be turned out of the House of Commons."¹ His party justified his absence on the ground, that much might happen, before the next session, to improve his chances of admission, — some crisis was evidently near at hand, which it might be well to await; some new elections might possibly occur which might bring a group of Catholic representatives, instead of a single one, to the table of the House, and make the attempt much more imposing. Whatever were his reasons, Mr. O'Connell did not offer himself for admission to the House during the three weeks of the session which remained after his return as member for Clare.

"Nothing is talked of now which interests anybody the least in the world," writes Lord Eldon,² on the 9th of July, "except the election of Mr. O'Connell, and the mischief that it will produce among debaters in the House of Commons, and the more serious mischief which it will, in all human probability, excite in Ireland. As O'Connell will not, though elected, be allowed to take his seat in the House of Commons, unless he will take the oaths, &c., — and that he won't do, unless he can get absolution, — his rejection from the Commons may excite rebellion in Ireland. At all events, this business must bring the Roman-Catholic question, which has been so often discussed, to a crisis and a conclusion. The nature of that conclusion I don't think likely to be favorable to Protestantism. . . . We shall see whether our present rulers have the courage with which a Mr. Pitt would have acted under present circumstances. I don't expect it of

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 55.

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 54.

them." It is clear that the Clare election had already done some good. It had opened the eyes of the most haughty of the anti-Catholics to the fact, that the question was approaching its crisis and conclusion.

The next obvious effect was a singular one,—the conversion of some of the county members of Ireland who were strong in the Protestant interest. It has been seen ^{State of Ireland.} that the Association was threatening and preparing to carry all the other Irish counties as it had carried Clare; and one part of its preparations was, composing pledges which the Catholic candidates should be required to take. Even if the system of pledging had not been objectionable, these pledges must have been considered so in themselves by every man of strict principle and independent mind; and every candidate who would not agree to them was to be opposed by the whole power of the Catholic Association. Already the old relations of landlord and tenant were broken up; and the landed proprietors who had fallen under the machinery of the Association were humbled and disabled. Here was another mode of operation threatened, under which the political power of the Protestants was to be utterly crushed. The counties would be lost; or, if an existing member here and there held his position, it would be in a sort of vassalage to the Association, and at its mercy. The alarm operated very quickly in producing conversions among the Irish county representatives and their friends.¹ So early as the 12th of August,—ten days after the moving of the pledges in the Association,—we find Mr. Dawson, brother-in-law of Mr. Peel, and hitherto a vehement anti-Catholic, publicly avowing a change of opinions which induced him now to desire and advocate Catholic emancipation. Mr. Dawson was the head of the anti-Catholic party in the Commons, and was in the service of the Crown; and whatever he said publicly was of consequence, not only to his party, but to the Administration. What he now said, at a public dinner in Londonderry, was, that the Catholic Association must clearly be either crushed or conciliated, or society must dissolve into its elements in Ireland. He did not pretend to suppose it could now be crushed; and he avowed his wish that it might be conciliated. An example like this was sure to be eagerly imitated by many of the sufferers under the present evils of society in Ireland; and the conversions went on rapidly. The Association cared little about them; for they were confident that they should soon have the government avowedly on their side. Notwithstanding all the disgrace with which Mr. Dawson was visited by the Ministry, and all the disavowals of his relatives of any participation in what he had said, and all his protestations that he spoke for himself

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 130.

alone, the Catholic Association felt secure. He would not have said any thing, they were certain, that could put him into radical opposition with the ruling powers, in whose immediate service he was. He might have been rash in speaking so soon and so broadly; but there could be no doubt that what he had said might be taken as a prophecy of good times to come. So the Association went on gayly and boastfully, — promising speedy victory, but neglecting no preparations for carrying on a long conflict, if need should be.

We find, in a speech of Mr. Shiel's at this time, an account of the state of society in Ireland, which probably all parties, from Lord Eldon to Mr. O'Connell, would agree to be a fair representation. At one of the aggregate meetings, of which several were held during the Parliamentary recess, — at the great Munster meeting, — Mr. Shiel said, "What has government to dread from our resentment in peace? An answer is supplied by what we actually behold. Does not a tremendous organization extend over the whole island? Have not all the natural bonds by which men are tied together been broken and burst asunder? Are not all the relations of society, which exist elsewhere, gone? Has not property lost its influence? has not rank been stripped of the respect which should belong to it? and has not an internal government grown up, which, gradually superseding the legitimate authorities, has armed itself with a complete domination? Is it nothing that the whole body of the clergy are alienated from the State, and that the Catholic gentry and peasantry and priesthood are all combined in one vast confederacy? So much for Catholic indignation while we are at peace; and, when England shall be involved in war ———. I pause: it is not necessary that I should discuss that branch of the division, or point to the cloud, which, charged with thunder, is hanging over our heads."

No feature of Irish society alarmed government and all reflecting men more at that time, than the sudden and almost total cessation of Irish crime. That which, if it had come about gradually, and as a consequence of improved education or prosperity, would have been hailed as the greatest of encouragements and blessings, was now ominous and most alarming, as showing the power of the Catholic leaders, and the strength of their organization. At the bidding of these leaders, feuds were suspended; factions met and acted as brethren; and men mastered their strongest propensities, in order to become a vast soldiery for the achievement of political objects. In almost every county, the judges on circuit congratulated the magistrates on the disappearance of atrocious crimes, and the paucity of even the lighter offences.¹ The government would rather have had to deal with

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 135.

the average amount of Irish outrage, than to witness a lull which boded a coming hurricane. Ireland was governed now by a power greater than their own.

On the expiration of the Suppression Law in July, when the Catholic Association resumed its primitive form, the Orange Clubs sprang up again, affording a new cause of alarm. New Orange Associations were formed, under the name of Brunswick Clubs, which collected a Protestant rent, and in every way imitated the Catholic organization. The strength of the Brunswick Clubs lay in the north; that of the Catholics, in the south: but they did not, as the magistracy hoped, lie apart, railing at each other, without attempting collision. A rash and foolish Catholic agitator, Mr. Lawless, declared his intention of braving the British lion in its den, — its Irish den. He would visit “all the strongholds of the Orangemen.” And he went, with tens of thousands at his heels, for no other purpose, as far as appears, than rousing the antagonism of the Orangemen. He advertised, for some time previously, his intention of entering such and such a town, attended by so many thousand Catholics; and, naturally enough, the town was entered, early on the appointed morning, by troops of Orangemen, — many or most of them armed. This was not to be endured. The magistrates warned the people against attending these assemblages. The soldiery were kept on the alert. On one occasion, when the agitator himself was prevailed on by the magistrates and military commander to turn back, his followers got into a scuffle with the Protestant mob; and one man, a Catholic, was killed.¹ The Catholic Association saw that this would never do. Their policy was one of peaceful parade; and they would enter into no competition of force with the Orange party. They put forth all their influence at once to stop the assemblages of their own body, to induce them to lay aside all uniforms, flags, and military music, and abstain from all provoking demonstrations. It was wonderful how promptly and thoroughly the leaders were obeyed. Bodies of men, in one case amounting to fifty thousand, marching on with flags, music, and uniform, were met on the road by a hortatory address of O’Connell’s, and at once turned back and disbanded themselves, making no complaint of the loss of their pleasure, or of the money they had spent in their decorations. Throughout these perilous weeks, the legality and peaceableness were certainly on the side of the Catholics, — the rashness and vanity of some of their leaders being kept in check by the good sense and earnest patriotism of others; while, of the Orangemen, — of the Brunswick Clubs.² of others; while, of the Orangemen, — of the Brunswick Clubs, — even the old Tory, Lord Eldon,² could find nothing

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 139.

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 59.

more approbative to say than this, in answer to a request for his opinion on the subject of forming a Brunswick Club in England: "Already very inconvenient questions seem to have been stated, whether the calls upon the people of the country have not, some of them, been expressed in such terms as make it questionable whether those who, in such terms, make such calls, act as legally as they ought." This is put so very delicately, that we may see how reluctantly the admission is made. He goes on: "It is true, those who may so complain may most justly be told that they have not so objected to the shamefully illegal proceedings of the Roman-Catholic Association; and I think it not impossible that we may hear some abusing in Parliament the proceedings of Protestant Associations, who have mainly encouraged the proceedings of the Roman-Catholic Association: but this is an example not to be followed." It is curious to see how utterly blind Lord Eldon was, even at this time, and with all his fears of the Liberals, and his distrust of the government, to the real pressure of the case. No man talked more loudly of his terrors, or of expected apostacy in high places; yet what he anticipated was this, and no more:¹ "I look on the Roman-Catholic question as, bit by bit, here a little and there a little, to be ultimately, and at no distant day, carried. I have no conception, that even Oxford will struggle effectually against the great Church interests which will patronize that question, and those who support it in Parliament." It was too late for giving liberty, "bit by bit, here a little and there a little."

The Protestant Clubs in England did not succeed very well. The people generally were disposed to leave the matter to the government. There was a meeting of twenty thousand people on Pennenden Heath, in Kent, convened by Protestant leaders, and attended by some advocates of the Catholic cause.² The petition to Parliament proposed by the conveners was merely to declare attachment to our Protestant constitution, and to pray that it might be preserved inviolate. Some noblemen present moved that the business of dealing with the Catholics should be left with the government; but the petition was adopted by a large majority. This was the only demonstration of any importance in England.

O'Connell now found himself strong enough to declare his pleasure as to the legislation which should take place in regard to his cause; and he even dared a schism in the Catholic body. The English Catholics parted off from the Irish, on the question of securities. They were willing to negotiate with government on the subject of securities: O'Connell scorned them, feeling, as he said, that it was better to receive a part of the Catholic claims,

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 56.

² Annual Register, 1828, p. 145.

without being fettered with securities, and in full certainty that the rest of the demand must soon be granted, than to receive political equality on terms which might occasion future difficulty. He would not entertain the "paltry question of political discount:" he would have full emancipation, either at once, or by instalments; but he would give nothing in return for clear political rights. But on no subject were his asseverations so emphatic as on that of the disfranchisement of "the forties." He ^{Forty-shilling Freeholders.} well knew that his former agreement, to sacrifice the forties, had never been forgotten; and he now doubled and redoubled his protestations, given in the strongest terms the language affords, that he would never permit their franchise to be touched. On the 16th of December, the Association unanimously passed a resolution, "that they would deem any attempt to deprive the forty-shilling freeholders of their franchise, a direct violation of the constitution." Mr. O'Connell "would rather die," than yield that franchise; "would say, that, if any man dared to bring in a Bill for the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders, the people ought to rebel, if they cannot otherwise succeed." Again: "Sooner than give up the forty-shilling freeholders, I would rather go back to the penal code. They form part of the constitution; their right is as sacred as that of the King to his throne; and it would be treason against the people to attempt to disfranchise them. . . . I would conceive it just to resist that attempt with force; and in such resistance I would be ready to perish in the field, or on the scaffold." So said O'Connell up to the end of the year. As for Mr. Shiel, he said, in anticipating the policy of the Duke of Wellington, "I trust he will not pursue this course; but, if he should, I tell him, we would rather submit for ever to the pressure of the parricidal code, which crushed our fathers to the grave, than assent to this robbery of a generous peasantry." These declarations were made in public, at the Clare election, and at the meetings of the Association, and printed in the newspapers, at a time when all men's ears were open, and every word of the Catholic leaders echoed from end to end of the empire; and by them the leaders must be judged.

During these important months, nothing seems to have been seen and heard of the Irish government, till, on the 1st of October, it issued a proclamation against such ^{The Viceroy.} assemblages as had already been put down by the influence of the Association. All was again still and mute, till a strange incident, which occurred in the last month of the year, fixed attention on the two friends, — the Duke of Wellington and the Marquis of Anglesey, who governed England and Ireland.

Dr. Curtis, the titular Catholic Primate of Ireland, had been intimate with the Duke of Wellington, ever since the Peninsular

War, when Dr. Curtis held a high office in the University of Salamanca, and was able to render important services to the British army. The Catholic Primate wrote to the Premier on the state of Ireland, on the 4th of December of this year; and, on the 11th, the Duke wrote in reply, — as friend to friend, and without any idea of a political use being made of what he said.¹ There was nothing in the letter which would have fixed attention, if it had been from any other man; and it now appears natural and reasonable enough, and little or nothing more than he had said in Parliament half a year before. He reciprocates his correspondent's desire to see the question settled; sees no prospect of it; laments the existing party-spirit and violence; thinks, if men could bury the subject in oblivion for a short time, during which difficulties might be pondered, — a curious method, by the way, of burying a subject in oblivion, — “it might be possible to discover a satisfactory remedy.”

A copy of this letter was presently in Mr. O'Connell's hands. Mr. O'Connell carried it to the Association, and read it aloud: the Association received it with cheers, and recorded it on their minutes, as a decisive declaration of the Prime Minister in favor of Catholic emancipation. This was not, perhaps, so audacious a stretch of interpretation, as some persons — probably including the writer of the letter himself — supposed: for the impediments were now clearly only external and circumstantial; and the Association might reasonably feel equal to the conquest of all such. Meantime, Dr. Curtis had replied to the Duke, in a long letter, in which he set forth his reasons for thinking that the burying the subject in oblivion was wholly out of the question; and that every attempt to get rid of it would be extremely dangerous. He sent copies of the Duke's letter and his own reply to the Lord-lieutenant; and the Lord-lieutenant in return explained his own view to be, that the Catholic agitation should be continued. No doubt, this was not intended in contradiction or opposition to the Premier; but under the idea that the Catholic agitation was the surest means of overpowering the difficulties which embarrassed the Premier, and thus of aiding the government. Its effect, however, was strange, from its appearance of being in direct opposition to the views of the head of the government. Not less strange was the following sentence of Lord Anglesey's reply: “Your letter gives me information on a subject of the highest interest. I did not know the precise sentiments of the Duke of Wellington upon the present state of the Catholic question.”² What were men to think of this? They must conclude one of two things, — both highly injurious to government: either that there was such indifference about the Catholics, as that their

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 148.

² Annual Register, 1828, p. 150.

cause had not been discussed with the Lord-lieutenant, among other subjects of Irish policy; or that the Lord-lieutenant was not in the confidence of government at home. It was impossible not to entertain the last of these suppositions; especially as the Viceroy proceeds to say that he must acknowledge his disappointment at finding — still from the Duke's letter merely — that there was no prospect of Catholic emancipation being effected during the approaching session of Parliament. This was on the 23d of December; only six weeks before the opening of the session. These are curious disclosures of the way in which one of the most important events in British history, and in the history of civil and religious liberty everywhere, was first awaited, and then brought to pass.

This letter, too, was immediately carried to the Catholic Association, and read aloud amidst plaudits, like the other. In this case the applause was natural enough; for the letter recommended a strenuous pushing of the Catholic cause, by peaceable means: "The question should not be for a moment lost sight of;" but "let the Catholic trust to the justice of his cause," and use none but unexceptionable means, that his plea might "be met by the Parliament under the most favorable circumstances." Such encouragement from the ruler of Ireland and a privy-councillor of the King, might well be received with cheers. A large tribute of admiration was voted to him for his "manliness and political sagacity." His sagacity seems to have failed him in regard to his own interests, however, — his reputation for prudence and even political honor. If he was surprised, ^{Recall of the Viceroy.} no one else was, when the next English packet brought his recall.¹ He left Ireland in January, and was succeeded in the viceroyalty by the Duke of Northumberland.

One cannot but see some comic intermixture with the very serious aspect of the times, at the close of 1828. ^{Aspect of the question.} There were the Duke of Wellington and the Marquis of Anglesey made the two pets of the Catholic Association, — their letters treasured in the minutes, and themselves assumed to be both friends of Catholic objects; while, at the same time, and in consequence of these very proceedings, the Duke was recalling the marquis, because the marquis had brought the Duke into an irremediable difficulty. The Catholic Association was pledging itself to send seventy county members into the House, while its very existence was for the purpose of obtaining an admission to Parliament at all. While the Catholic leaders were assuming that they should have all they wanted very soon, and the Brunswick Clubmen were certain that they would never obtain any thing at all, as long as there were true Britons who would make

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 151.

their dead bodies a barrier between the Catholics and the privileges of Protestantism, the English Tories, through the mouth of Lord Eldon, lamented that, "bit by bit," emancipation would be granted; and the Liberals were certain that the Duke meant to yield every thing in the course of the next session; while the Duke himself certainly was not aware, in the middle of the closing month of the year, that he meant any thing at all. He might appropriate the saying of the sage: "All I know is that I know nothing."

Mr. Shiel has left us a picture of the time, in a speech at the Association: "The Minister folds his arms, as if he were a mere indifferent observer, and the terrific contest only afforded him a spectacle for the amusement of his official leisure. He sits as if two gladiators were crossing their swords for his recreation. The Cabinet seems to be little better than a box in an amphitheatre, from whence His Majesty's ministers may survey the business of blood." The Viceroy was recalled for desiring and promoting what the head of the government was about to do. As for the great Catholic leader, the most noticeable particular about him was his having pledged himself to perdition, if ever again he would compromise the franchise of "the forties." Times seem to have become too hard for men's wits, — for their endowments of sagacity and judgment, and of that prudence which, in affairs so momentous as this, should go by the name of conscience.

CHAPTER VI.

IN the speech with which the King, by commission, dismissed Parliament on the 28th of July, the first point of interest was a declaration of the reviving prosperity of the people. After the dreadful shocks of 1825 and 1826, it was some time before any revival of trade was apparent, at all adequate to the wants of the working-classes. But now the immense stocks of every species of manufacture which had been prepared under the mania of speculation were pretty well cleared off; money and commodities had resumed an ascertained and natural value; and the state of the revenue and the general contentment indicated that a condition of prosperity had returned. One advantage of this was, that many statesmen, and whole classes of "interests," became convinced that free trade — as the very partial relaxations of former commercial restriction were then called — was not the cause of the late distresses, — was certainly enhancing the prosperity, — was, in short, found to be a very good thing.

Close of the
session of
1828.

The King's speech carefully indicated, that the war which had been declared between Russia and the Porte was wholly unconnected with the Treaty of London; and promised to continue the efforts which had been made, in concert with the King of France, to promote peace between Russia and Turkey. Meantime, the Emperor had been induced not to carry war into the Mediterranean, where so many interests were involved; and had actually recalled his warlike instructions to the commanders of his fleet in the Levant.

It was announced that great disappointment had occurred with regard to Portugal, and that it had been found necessary by all the powers of Europe to withdraw their representatives from Lisbon.

Affairs of
Portugal.

The mistake with regard to Portugal had been in ever appointing as Regent such a man as Don Miguel. It might be evident enough that difficulties would be reconciled, and the future would be provided for, by uniting the interests of the different branches of the royal family, in his regency, and his marriage with the yet childish Queen; but all political arrangements proceed on

the supposition, that more or less reliance is to be placed on the acting parties; — that some obligations of conscience, or at least of reputation, exist in each party that enters into a contract. But the conduct of Don Miguel, in regard to his father, and in other instances, had shown him to be, not only untrustworthy, but a sort of moral monster, who cannot be treated with as men usually are. Yet his brother, the Emperor of Brazil, thought he had arranged every thing, and settled adverse claims, by appointing him Regent of Portugal, and promising him marriage with the young Queen.

At the beginning of this year, Don Miguel had been in England. He spent nearly two months in London; and it was regarded as a good sign, that he went there, and associated with the rulers and statesmen of a free country, rather than visit the courts of despotic sovereigns. He had taken the oath to preserve the new constitution of Portugal, and had written to his sister — his predecessor in the regency — from Vienna, that he was determined to maintain inviolate the laws of the kingdom, and the institutions legally granted by Don Pedro, and to cause them to be observed, and by them to govern the kingdom.¹ And, before he left England, he had, according to the universal belief, written a letter voluntarily to George IV., in which he said, that, “if he overthrew the constitution, he should be a wretch, a breaker of his oath, and a usurper of his brother’s throne.” There was never any question of his being bound by the strongest obligations to administer constitutional government in Portugal, if he had been one who could be bound by any obligations whatever. But, as it was proved that he was not such a one, he should not have been trusted with any political powers whatever.

The Princess-regent took leave of the Cortes in January; and, on the 22d of February, Don Miguel landed at Lisbon.² Among the acclamations which greeted him, — the cries of “Long live the Infant!” — a few voices were heard shouting, “Long live Don Miguel, the absolute King!” Neither on this occasion, nor when he went in procession to the cathedral, and heard more of the same shouts, did the Prince take any notice of them. They passed as the cries of a few discontented men among the rabble; and it was never clear whether Don Miguel had at this time any intention of usurping the throne, or whether he was afterwards instigated to it by his mother. From the moment when he fell on his knees before his mother, he showed himself her slave, and wrought out her wicked pleasure most zealously, whatever might have been his previous intentions. He was to swear to the constitution, four days after his arrival,

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 178.

² Annuaire Historique, 1828, p. 516.

in the presence of the two Chambers and of the Court. There was something strange about the ceremony, which excited the suspicions of the bystanders. The Prince was ill at ease, hurried, and confused; and he spoke too low to be heard by those nearest to him. The Archbishop of Lisbon, who administered the oath, stood directly in front of the Prince, with his priestly garments spread wide, so that the Regent was little better seen than heard. He is declared not to have touched the book of the Gospels, and to have said, when the show was over, "Well, I have gone through the ceremony of swearing to the charter; but I have sworn nothing."¹ One significant circumstance is, that there was no register, or legal record of any kind, of the event. The next day the new Ministry was announced; and the announcement spread dismay among the constitutionalists. The funds fell; the bank, which was to have set off on a new score that day, feared a run, and postponed its payments indefinitely: all business was at a stand in Lisbon. The mob assembled under the windows of the Queen-mother, shouting for absolutism; and the Prime Minister distributed money among them. During the month of March, the proceedings of the Regent were so open and shameless, in insulting and displacing liberals, and favoring the absolutists, that many hundreds of the best families in Lisbon left the capital. Just at this time, the British troops sent by Mr. Canning were embarking for their return; and a large amount of money—a loan from M. Rothschild to the Prince—was arriving. The new British Ambassador at Lisbon, Sir Frederick Lamb, decided, on his own responsibility, to detain the troops, and send the money back to London; that the usurper—for it was now no secret that the Prince was about to assume the title of King—might be awed by the presence of British troops, and unaided in his treasonable purposes by British gold. This was in the middle of March; and it was the beginning of April before the British Ambassador could receive instructions how to proceed.

On the 14th of March, the Prince dissolved the Chambers, to evade the passing of a vote of thanks to the British commanders, and some troublesome inquiries into State abuses. On the 2d of April, the British troops were embarked for home, in pursuance of orders received by the ambassador. Before this, the Prince had been declared in several provincial towns to be absolute King, Don Miguel I. When the British troops were gone, and with them all the respectable Liberals who could get away, there was no further impediment to the proclamation taking place in the capital; and the thing was done on the birthday of the Queen-mother, on the 25th of April. The scene was opened by the commandant of police with his guard, before the Hall of the

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1828, p. 525.

Municipality, between eight and nine in the morning. Baring their heads, and drawing their sabres, they cried aloud, "Long live Don Miguel the First! Long live the Empress-mother!" Thereupon the national flag was slung up on the roof of the hall, and the municipal authorities appeared in the balcony, to proclaim the new King. The proclamation was repeated at noon through the city; and all citizens were invited to sign a memorial, imploring Don Miguel to assume the function of King. This memorial was presented in the evening; but the paucity and doubtful character of the signatures — according to some authorities — annoyed and alarmed the Prince.¹ According to others, the signatures were wonderfully numerous; but the Prince dared not proceed to extremities at once, because all the foreign ambassadors had notified, that they should leave Lisbon immediately on his assumption of the title of King.² He desired the memorialists to wait, and see what he would do.

A note was sent round the next morning from the foreign Minister to these representatives, regretting the popular manifestation of the preceding day, and assuring them that every thing possible had been done by government to keep the people quiet. The foreign ambassadors met to confer upon their reply; and they agreed upon a notification to the Minister, that they suspended all official intercourse with the government, till they should receive fresh instructions from their respective courts.

All disguise was soon thrown off. On the 3d of May, Don Miguel issued a summons to the ancient three estates of the kingdom, who had not been assembled for upwards of a hundred and thirty years. They were to meet to "recognize the application of grave points of Portuguese right," since the importunate demand of various bodies in the State, that the Prince would assume empire, had become very perplexing to him. The difficulty was how to sign this document. The awkwardness of signing in Don Pedro's name an invitation to declare that Don Pedro had no rights in Portugal, was so great, that the Prince actually signed it as Don Miguel I. As King, he summoned the estates who were to meet to invite him to become King.

The estates met on the 26th of June, and immediately declared Don Miguel to be lawfully King of Portugal. On the 28th, the new sovereign assumed his full name and title. He had not been left in peace and quiet in the interval. Oporto and other towns had risen against him; and many of the Portuguese refugees in England had returned to conduct the war. But they were delayed on the voyage; affairs had been mismanaged; and there was nothing left for them to do but to make the best retreat they could through Spain.

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 193.

² Annuaire Historique, 1828, p. 534.

Of course, the ambassadors all took their departure at the end of June. At first, the usurper did not conceal his rage and mortification; but presently he gave out declarations, that they had all been recalled by his express desire, in order to be succeeded by others less addicted to freemasonry, — his word, and that of other despots, for liberalism.¹ From this time the course of the usurper became altogether disgusting; his practices could only be — where it was possible — denied by his flatterers; nobody vindicated them. He filled the prisons; set aside the laws, in order to procure the sacrifice of his enemies; confiscated all the property he could lay hands on; and spread such ruin, that, with all his devices, he could not raise money enough for his purposes. He actually asked for a loyal subscription; and the names of the donors, advertised in the Lisbon “Gazette,” looked grand in regard to rank and title; but the sum produced was only 4000*l*.

Don Pedro, meantime, had heard of his brother’s dutiful acceptance of the charge of the regency, and of his being in London, where the Brazilian Emperor hoped he would learn some good lessons. Believing that the time was now come for his final surrender of all authority in Portugal, the Emperor prepared his concluding act of abdication on the 3d of March. He little dreamed what his unworthy brother was doing, or he would not have yielded up his powers at such a time; and much less would he have sent his young daughter to Europe. As for the manifesto of abdication, the Brazilian Ministers at Vienna and London assumed the responsibility of keeping it back, and preventing its being officially communicated to any of the European powers. When the bad news from Portugal reached the Emperor, he issued a decree, on the 25th of July, reprobating the acts of the usurping government, but treating his brother with a leniency which appeared strange; but which may be perhaps accounted for on the supposition that he had fears for his daughter, and might be uncertain about her probable fate. He spoke of Don Miguel as doubtless a captive, and a victim in the hands of a party who compelled him to acts abhorrent to his nature. The government newspapers at Lisbon retorted by assuring the world, that Don Pedro could not have prepared such a decree, except under the influence of “the horrid sect of Freemasons, who are the enemies of the throne and the altar.”

The little Queen, Donna Maria, now nine years old, arrived at Gibraltar on the 2d of September, on her way to Queen of Portugal. Genoa, where she was to land, and proceed to Vienna, on a visit to her grandfather, the Emperor of Austria. The news which her conductors heard at Gibraltar, however, put them also upon considering their responsibilities; and they decided —

¹ Annual Register, 1828, p. 201.

as so many had before done, to the high honor of our country — that England was the safest retreat for a sufferer under a political adversity.¹ One of the frigates was immediately sent back to Brazil with the latest news of what had occurred; and the other brought Donna Maria to England. She arrived ^{Arrives in England.} off Falmouth on the 24th of September. She was received with royal honors; and there was something very affecting in the sight of the eagerness with which the noble Portuguese refugees rushed on board, to devote themselves to her and the vindication of her rights. If she was too young to be duly touched with a sense of her situation, others felt it for her. He who had sworn to govern for her with fidelity, during her tender years, had usurped her throne; he who was to have been her husband had repelled her from the shores of her own kingdom, and cast her upon the mercy of the world. No wonder the refugees rushed to her feet; for every heart in England bled for her.

When the frigate arrived at Falmouth, the Queen and her conductors were uncertain whether she would be received as Duchess of Oporto, or as a sovereign.² Every thing hung now on a few moments. But all was well. The royal salute came thundering over the waters from the forts and the ships, and up went the flags on every hand. Then up went the royal standard of Portugal, and the young girl and her retinue knew that she was acknowledged Queen by Great Britain. On her way to London, she was greeted with addresses by the corporations of all the principal towns she passed through, and the people everywhere received her with cheers. In London, almost before the Portuguese residents could pay their duty to their sovereign, the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary arrived to welcome Her Majesty to our metropolis. They came in their state carriages, in military uniform, and covered with orders. The King sent messages. He was at his cottage at Windsor, living in almost utter seclusion, and, as his people now began to be aware, in feeble and declining health. On the 12th of October, the birthday of Don Pedro, an affecting ceremony took place at the residence of the Marquis Palmella. The whole of the Portuguese and Brazilian Legations being present, and the Brazilian and Portuguese Ministers at the courts of Vienna and the Netherlands, the Marquis Palmella told the whole story of Don Pedro's conduct and the young Queen's position, read the decrees and the Emperor's despatches, and, in short, put his hearers in possession of the entire case, in a discourse of three-quarters of an hour. The marquis then, as the intended Prime Minister of the Queen, first took the oath of fealty to her; and his example was followed by all present, —

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1828, p. 568.

² *Annual Register*, 1828, *Chron.* p. 126.

ambassadors, generals, peers of her realm, members of the Cortes, and military and political officers of various ranks, — in all above two hundred.¹ She had thus a little court about her while she remained in England; which was till the next year, when her father recalled her to Brazil. By that time it was explained, that, while Great Britain acknowledged her sovereignty, discountenanced her usurping uncle, and desired to extend all due hospitality towards her, it was not possible to do more. Our treaties of alliance with Portugal, it was declared, bound us to aid her against foreign aggression, but not to interfere in her domestic struggles. We had sent troops to Portugal when Spain was invading her liberties; but we could not impose or depose her rulers.

Towards the close of the year, — on the 15th of December, — the funeral train at last left the door of Lord Liver- ^{Death of Lord} pool's abode at Wimbledon.² Of those who had hourly ^{Liverpool.} looked for his death, nearly two years before, and who had held the affairs of the country suspended in expectation of it, some had long been in their graves. He was now released at last: and his funeral train was a long one; for his private life had won for him a gratitude and warm regard, which made him now more thought of as the kindly hearted man, than as the respectable Minister who had ostensibly governed the country for fifteen years.

¹ Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 138.

² Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 178.

CHAPTER VII.

THERE never was an instance in which men were more universally sally blamed than the Wellington Administration were ^{difficulties in the Cabinet.} at the time of the removal of the Catholic disabilities. The public always will and must judge by what they know; and those who knew only what was on the face of things could not but form an unfavorable judgment, in every light, of the conduct of the Duke and his colleagues. Their own party, of course, thought them faithless, infirm, and cowardly. The fact was before all eyes, that they had suddenly relinquished the declared principles, and stultified the professions, of their whole political lives, deceived and deserted their friends and supporters, and offered to history a flagrant instance of political apostasy. The opposition complained, with equal appearance of reason, that, after having thwarted, in every possible way, the efforts of Mr. Canning and the other friends of the Catholics, they shamelessly carried the measures which they would not hear of from Mr. Canning; that, having damaged the liberal statesmen of their day with all their influence, they stepped in at last to do the work which had been laboriously prepared in spite of them, and took the credit of it. Truly, their credit was but little with even those who put the best construction upon their conduct. By such, they were believed to have yielded to an overwhelming necessity, and thus to deserve no praise at all; while there was much that was inexplicable and unsatisfactory in their method of proceeding. There was evidence, that, up to the middle of December, the Prime Minister did not intend to remove the Catholic disabilities, or that he chose the public to suppose it; while, on the 5th of February, the speech from the throne recommended their removal. Time, however, clears up many things. The conduct of the ministers was inexplicable; for their difficulties were of a nature which they could not explain. They explained, as much as men of honor and loyalty in their position could, the necessity which existed for what they were doing; but about every thing which most closely concerned themselves, every thing which was necessary to clear their political character, they were compelled to keep silence. By others, however, bit by bit, and in a course of nearly

twenty years, disclosures have been made, which appear to put us in full possession of their case, and leave us with the conviction that their fault lay in their preceding political course, and not in their conduct at this juncture. Their anti-Catholic principles and policy had been mistaken, as the liberal party had, of course, always declared. There was nothing new in that. And a close study of the facts of their case, as now known, seems to lead to their acquittal of all blame in the great transactions of 1829.

The difficulty which embarrassed them, and compromised their reputation, was in regard to the King. Lord Eldon, The King. and others, who saw him from time to time, had been struck by the change in his health in 1827, from which period he continued to decline. By his mode of living, he had never given himself a chance for health; and, when the health breaks up under such circumstances, there can hardly be any serenity of temper or tranquillity of mind. He was at this time truly wretched; and he made everybody about him miserable. He vacillated between despondency and levity, irascibility and weak fondness; and, worst of all, not the slightest dependence was to be placed upon his word. In unreliableness he was a match for O'Connell himself. There is usually a tacit understanding among us in favor of ministers, where any difficulty with the sovereign is supposed to exist. It was so in the case of the hovering insanity of George III.; and there have been times since when a generous aid has been afforded by opposition in Parliament to a minister who might be supposed to be under embarrassments which a loyal subject and servant of the Crown could not explain, or in any way indicate. But, during the crisis under our notice, no one could imagine the difficulties the Administration were under with the King; and the extreme seclusion in which the King shut himself up, gave them no chance of his so exposing himself to any eyes but their own, as to obtain for them the allowance which their position required. It is all known now; or, at least, so much is revealed as amply to vindicate the honor of the Wellington Administration.

On the 28th of September, 1828, the Duke of Wellington had written to the Viceroy of Ireland, that the Catholic question was "a subject of which the King never hears or speaks without his mind being disturbed."¹ On the 11th of November, again, he wrote: "I cannot express to you adequately the extent of the difficulties which these and other occurrences in Ireland create, in all discussions with His Majesty." We have already seen evidence, that, up to the middle of December, the ministers had no idea that any thing could be done towards conciliating the Catholics. The King's own account of what happened next was this,

¹ Annual Register, 1829, p. 89.

given to Lord Eldon¹ in conversation on the 28th of the next March: "That, at the time the Administration was formed, no reason was given him to suppose that any measures for the relief of the Roman Catholics were intended or thought of by ministers; that he had frequently himself suggested the absolute necessity of putting down the Roman-Catholic Association, — of suspending the Habeas-Corpus Act, to destroy the powers of the most seditious and rebellious proceedings of the members of it, and particularly at the time that Lawless made his march; that, instead of following what he had so strongly recommended, after some time, not a very long time before the present session, he was applied to, to allow his ministers to propose to him, as a united Cabinet, the opening of Parliament by sending such a message as his speech contained; that, after much struggling against it, and after the measure had been pressed upon him as an absolute necessity, he had consented that the Protestant members of his Cabinet, if they could so persuade themselves to act, might join in such a representation to him: but that he would not then, nor in his recommendation to Parliament, pledge himself to any thing. He repeatedly mentioned that he represented to his ministers the infinite pain it gave him to consent even so far as that."

It was foolish to talk of refusing to pledge himself to any thing, while permitting his ministers to request from him a message to Parliament which he contemplated granting. In consenting to receive the proposed representation of his ministers, he pledged himself to their policy; and he must have known at the time that he did so, though in his anger and wretchedness afterwards he endeavored to persuade himself and Lord Eldon that he had kept open a way of escape. Meantime, the case of his ministers was a hard one. Having once obtained the King's consent to bring forward a measure in relief of the Catholics, they should have had every encouragement and assistance from him. But he led them a terrible life at present, when they had quite enough to bear from other quarters, and when they were so completely committed that nothing could be gained by making them miserable.

When February came in, the best-informed politicians began whispering to each other, that the King's speech, which was to be read on the 5th, would contain large concessions to the Catholics. On the 4th, at the dinners held as usual at the houses of the two leaders of government in Parliament, the speech was read, and found to contain all that had been rumored, and more. After an allusion to the disorders in Ireland caused by the Catholic Association, and expressions of a determination to put them down, followed the recommendation of the King to Parliament to consider

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 83.

whether the civil disabilities of the Catholics could not be removed, "consistently with the full and permanent security of our establishments in Church and State." On the same day, Mr. Peel addressed a letter to the Vice-chancellor of Oxford, offering to resign his seat for the University, because ^{Mr. Peel's resignation of his seat.} he believed that his resistance to the Catholic claims had been one of the main grounds upon which the confidence of his constituents in him had been founded: and he could now resist those claims no longer; but, on the contrary, found himself impelled, for the peace of the country, to advise the King to propose a settlement of the question. What Mr. Canning had foregone, Mr. Peel now resigned, — the honor and the trust which he valued above all others.

Mr. Peel's resignation was accepted; and the new election soon took place. There was an intention, on the part of the anti-Catholic members of the University, to bring forward Lord Encombe, the grandson of Lord Eldon, who consented to the nomination; but it was found that Mr. Peel was so strongly supported, that it would be necessary to oppose to him a candidate of graver years and greater weight than the youthful Lord Encombe; and Sir Robert H. Inglis was the choice of the University. The contest was eager and close. During the three days that it lasted, 1364 voters polled; and the majority by which Sir Robert H. Inglis won his seat was only 146. Mr. Peel was returned for the borough of Westbury, in time to assume the management of the Catholic-Relief Bill in the Commons.

No division took place in either House on the address in answer to the royal speech, which was, as usual now, ^{Speech and address.} delivered by commission. The King appeared averse to meeting his Parliament, or seeing any one else whom he could avoid; and the present occasion was one the least likely to draw him forth from his retirement, though the sanction of his presence would at this time have been especially valuable to his ministers. The Prime Minister expressed his desire, that no discussion of the Catholic question should take place till the measure should be brought forward; explaining that the measure would be proposed in a substantial shape, without going through a committee; that its purport would be a removal of all the civil disabilities of the Catholics, with a few special exceptions; and that it would be accompanied by provisions rendered necessary by the removal of the disabilities.

Before the subject could be entered upon, it was essential to procure the dissolution of the Catholic Association. ^{Catholic Association dissolved.} The preceding Acts passed for the purpose had failed; and the difficulty was great of framing a law which could not be evaded as they had been. The present Act was

limited as to time, being proposed for only one year; and the penalties were not severe: but it gave large powers to the Viceroy of Ireland. It was not opposed by the friends of the Catholics, who took it as a part of a series of measures, and were well aware that there would be no need to put it in force. And its powers were never put to the proof; for the Association dissolved itself before the Bill became law. The Bill was brought forward by Mr. Peel, in the Commons, on the 10th of February; and it passed the Lords on the 24th of the same month.¹ Already the Association existed no longer; and the Houses and the country were at liberty to go on with the great question of all.

On the 5th of March, Mr. Peel brought forward the measure for the relief of the Catholics.² The tables of both Houses had been loaded with petitions for and against the Bill, from the first possible day after its announcement. The strength of the anti-Catholic party, as shown in petitions, was great; but in the House of Commons it was not so. The same reasons which had caused the conversion of the Administration, caused that of their adherents generally; and the power of argument was all on one side.

The Bill proposed an oath, in the place of the oath of supremacy, by which a Catholic entering Parliament bound himself to support the existing institutions of the State, and not to injure those of the Church.³ It admitted Catholics to all corporate offices, and the enjoyment of all municipal advantages; and to the administration of civil and criminal justice. The army and navy were open to them before. The only exclusions were from the offices of Regent, of Lord Chancellor of England and Ireland, and of Viceroy of Ireland. From all offices connected with the Church, its universities and schools, and from all disposal of Church-patronage, they were of course excluded. Such were the grants and exclusions.⁴ As for the securities and restrictions proposed, the most important related to the franchise; and, of these, the chief was the substitution of a ten-pound for a forty-shilling qualification, in Ireland. The government refused to interfere, in one way or other, with the Roman-Catholic religion, but were willing to leave it on the footing of dissent, neither proposing, on the one hand, to endow the clergy, nor, on the other, to pry into its relations with Rome: but the Bill forbade the display of the insignia of office in any place of worship but those of the Established Church; the use of Episcopal titles and names by Roman Catholic clergy; the extension of monachism within the empire; and the introduction of more Jesuits than were already in the

¹ Hansard, xx. pp. 177-519.

² Hansard, xx. pp. 760-3.

³ Hansard, xx. p. 727.

⁴ Hansard, xx. pp. 764-777.

country, and who were henceforth to be subject to registration. Such were the securities and restrictions.

Mr. Peel's speech lasted four hours, during which time the House was alternately in a state of profound stillness, and echoing with cheers. At times, the cheers were so loud as to be heard in Westminster Hall. The occasion united in itself two very strong interests,—that which related to the settlement of the Catholic question, and that which regarded the principles and conduct of the leading statesmen of the time. In both directions, the speech was eminently satisfactory. The Catholic question might be considered as settled, as the exposition of the measure fell from the lips of the speaker; and in regard to the political character of Mr. Peel,—the most important man in the country at that time, and to this day,—the case Mr. Peel.

was clear to the eyes of the impartial and philosophical observer: and all subsequent events have been but illustrations of what was that night revealed. Mr. Canning was wont to say, that Mr. Peel was his rightful successor in statesmanship; and so he has proved himself: but the method of his procedure has been as different from that of Canning as the nature of the man. Each has been an inestimable blessing to his country, in a singular and perilous period of transition,—the one, in spite of the drawbacks which attend upon all human agency; the other, apparently in consequence of them. Mr. Canning had a glorious apprehension of the principles of freedom, clouded and intercepted by prejudices full of insolence and perverseness. He toiled, and made sacrifices, for the relief of the Catholics, and used all the influence of his office and his character for the promotion of political liberty abroad; but he opposed parliamentary reform and the relief of the Dissenters. Mr. Peel appears never to have had, in his youth and early manhood, any conception of popular freedom at all. What he has is the result of a political experience which has emancipated him from the misfortunes of his early political training and connections. If any man could be said to have been born into a condition of political opinion, it was he. He was born into Conservatism, and reared in it, and stationed to watch over and preserve it; and herein lies the misfortune which probably alone has prevented his taking rank as a first-rate statesman. But that which is his personal misfortune has been, in the opinion of many of the wise, the saving of our country from revolution in an age of revolutions. He has been our bridge over the abyss in which the State might, ere this, have been lost. A statesman who, setting out on his course without high and definite aims, finds his principles by the wayside as he proceeds, can never be the highest of his order, however faithful and courageous he may be in the application of the truths which he has

appropriated: but in the absence of the loftiest statesmanship which can be conceived of, and which no reasonable nation expects at any given time to enjoy, the greatest blessing which can be desired is that of a statesman who can understand and guide the time; that guiding,—that leading on,—supposing him ahead of the average wisdom of his generation.

And this is what Mr. Peel has been to his country from the day of his bringing in the Catholic-Relief Bill. He was not then what he has since proved himself capable of being; but his explanation on that day showed to sagacious observers precisely what he was, and what he might be expected to become. At that time he was sorry that changes on behalf of liberalism were required. It would have pleased him better to have been able to go on in the old ways, which he believed to be safer for rulers, and happier for the people, than the new methods which compelled their own adoption. But he saw the necessity: he saw that to preserve the peace of society, and to respect the convictions of the majority, was a higher duty than to rule according to his own predilections. It was an irksome and a humiliating duty: but it was a clear one; and he did it. He had much to bear from the rage and contempt of old connections, and from the jealousy and scorn of the Liberals who had hitherto been his opponents; but these visitations were penalties on his former and lower opinions,—on his previous false position, and not on his new enlightenment. The enlightenment was not yet great; but, when once the clouds begin to part, there is no saying how much sunshine may be let down: a rent was made in the educational prejudice which had hitherto canopied his mind; and such rents are never closed. The cry at the time was, about this speech, in the market-places and by firesides, that it was not the speech of a great man; that it assumed a tone no higher than that of reluctant yielding to an irresistible necessity. And this was quite true. Such was the tone of the speech; and it was this very characteristic which gave hope to the wise, that the speaker would become, or would prove himself, a great man hereafter. They liked the simple truth of the explanation better than any sudden assumption of a higher ground. There was honesty and heart enough in it to afford an expectation that he would soon attain a higher ground, while there was an assurance that he would not pretend to any other ground than that which he actually held. From that time his expansion and advancement have been very remarkable. His mind and heart have kindled with an enthusiasm of which he was, twenty years ago, supposed unsusceptible; an enthusiasm of popular sympathy, and in favor of a pervasive justice. The union of this liberal sympathy with former habits of political conduct has made him a statesman precisely adapted

to his age ; to serve his country and his time, though not to reap the immediate rewards of popularity, or adequate gratitude. The mischief of his early false position has followed him throughout, and must ever follow him. Even such services as his, in themselves so unquestionable, have been received, up to the latest period, with a certain degree of mistrust ; and this is right : not because the man deserves it, — for he has long shown that he merits, and from the most thoughtful he certainly enjoys, the fullest confidence that can be reposed in any man who has proved himself fallible in his vocation ; but because it is inevitable that a man who has once been in a false position must forego the unhesitating trust which is reposed in a man of equal qualifications, who has always recognized, taken, and held his own true position. We have not, however, any other man of equal qualifications. We cannot have one of a more unquestionable disinterestedness ; and Mr. Peel stands pronounced, beyond all controversy, the greatest statesman of his age. To him we owe our rescue or exemption from the political calamities which perhaps no one else could have averted ; and to him we are indebted for so many homely and substantial benefits of good government, and such brilliant renovations of our national resources, that it seems impossible for the national gratitude to overtake his deserts. If he was at first the victim, he has since shown himself the conqueror, of time and circumstance ; and, for many years past, it has been clear to the unprejudiced, that all fault-finding with Mr. Peel's character and political conduct, as a whole, resolves itself into a complaint, that he was not made another sort of man than he is. This glance into the future, of whose events we have yet to treat, may be excused by the relation which that future bears to the occasion when Mr. Peel first stood up a reformer on any controverted party question. He was aware at the moment, that he stood at the most critical point of his political life ; and, after the lapse of twenty eventful years, it is impossible to say that he exaggerated, in the interest of the hour, its importance to himself, while he was perhaps further than some other people from being aware how serious was its significance in relation to the welfare of his country.

The state of the question, and the position of the Ministry, were briefly presented in the speech.¹ “According to my heart and conscience,” said Mr. Peel, “I believe that the time is come when less danger is to be apprehended to the general interests of the empire, and to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Protestant establishment, in attempting to adjust the Catholic question, than in allowing it to remain any longer in its present state. . . . Looking back upon the past, surveying the present,

¹ Hansard, xx. pp. 729, 732.

and forejudging the prospects of the future, again I declare, that the time has at length arrived when this question must be adjusted. . . . I have for years attempted to maintain the exclusion of Roman Catholics from Parliament and the high offices of the State. I do not think it was an unnatural or unreasonable struggle. I resign it in consequence of the conviction that it can be no longer advantageously maintained; from believing that there are not adequate materials or sufficient instruments for its effectual and permanent continuance. I yield, therefore, to a moral necessity which I cannot control, unwilling to push resistance to a point which might endanger the establishments that I wish to defend. . . . The outline of my argument is this: We are placed in a position in which we cannot remain. We cannot continue stationary. There is an evil in divided cabinets and distracted councils which can be no longer tolerated. . . . Supposing this established, and supposing it conceded that a united government must be formed; in the next place, I say that that government must choose one of two courses. They must advance, or they must recede. They must grant further political privileges to the Roman Catholics, or they must retract those already given. They must remove the barriers that obstruct the continued flow of relaxation and indulgence, or they must roll back to its source the mighty current which has been let in upon us, year after year, by the gradual withdrawal of restraint. I am asked what new light has broken in upon me; why I see a necessity for concession now, which was not evident before: . . . I detailed, on a former occasion, that a dreadful commotion had distracted the public mind in Ireland; that a feverish agitation and unnatural excitement prevailed, to a degree scarcely credible, throughout the entire country. I attempted to show, that social intercourse was poisoned there in its very springs; that family was divided against family, and man against his neighbor; that, in a word, the bonds of social life were almost dissevered; that the fountains of public justice were corrupted; that the spirit of discord walked openly abroad; and that an array of physical force was marshalled in defiance of all law, and to the imminent danger of the public peace. I ask, Could this state of things be suffered to exist? and what course were we to pursue? Perhaps I shall be told, as I was on a former occasion, in forcible though familiar language, that this is the old story! that all this has been so for the last twenty years, and that therefore there is no reason for change. Why, this is the very reason for a change. It is because the evil is not casual and temporary, but permanent and inveterate,—it is because the detail of misery and outrage is nothing but the “old story,” that I am contented to run the hazards of a change. We cannot determine

upon remaining idle spectators of the discord and disturbance of Ireland. The universal voice of the country declares that something must be done. I am but echoing the sentiments of all reasonable men, when I repeat, that something must be done. I wish, however, to take nothing for granted, but to found my argument, not upon general assent, but upon unquestionable facts. I ask you to go back to a remoter period than it is generally the habit to embrace in these discussions, — I ask you to examine the state of His Majesty's government for the last thirty-five years, and to remark the bearing of the Catholic question upon that government, the divisions it has created among our statesmen, the distraction it has occasioned among our councils, and the weakness it has consequently produced. I ask you, then, to observe what has been the course of Parliament for the same period. And, lastly, what has been the consequence of the divisions in the councils of the King, and of disunion between the two Houses of Parliament, — the practical consequences as to Ireland."

The narrative of these divisions is mournful enough, not only in its detail of the consequences to Ireland, but as proving how much evil men will cause and endure rather than surrender their prejudices, and the power which they hold on the tenure of bigotry. In the time of Lord Liverpool, it appears that the prejudices had become scarcely tenable, and the power of tyranny very precarious.¹ In 1825, Mr. Peel declared, "I stated to the Earl of Liverpool, who was then at the head of the Administration, that, in consequence of the decision given against me in this House, it was my anxious wish to be relieved from office. It was, however, notified to me, that my retirement would occasion the retirement of the Earl of Liverpool; and that such an event would at once produce a dissolution of the Administration, the responsibility of which would rest with me. . . . Lord Liverpool was then approaching the end of his career. I had entered public life under his auspices, and I shrank from the painful task of causing his retirement, and the dissolution of His Majesty's existing government. If I had acted simply in obedience to my own wishes, I would have resigned. I was induced, however, to retain office, and to ascertain the result of another appeal to the country by a general election. In 1826 there was a new Parliament. In 1827 a majority in this House decided against the Catholic question. In 1828, however, the House took a different view of the matter; and, though it did not pass a Bill, it agreed to a resolution favorable to the principle of adjustment. That resolution being passed, I was again in the situation in which I had been placed in 1825, and I determined to retire from

¹ Hansard, xx. p. 731.

office. I intimated my fixed intention in this respect to the Duke of Wellington; but I felt it my duty to accompany that intimation with the declaration, not only that I would not, in a private capacity, any longer obstruct a settlement which appeared to me ultimately inevitable, but that I would advise and promote it. Circumstances occurred, as I have already explained, under which I was appealed to to remain in office; under which I was told, that my retirement from office must prevent the adoption of the course which I was disposed to recommend. I resolved, therefore, and without doubt or hesitation, not to abandon my post, but to take all the personal consequences of originating and enforcing, as a Minister, the very measure which I had heretofore opposed."

In the other House, the explanations were as characteristic, and almost as interesting, as in the Commons. The Duke of Wellington. Duke of Wellington apologized at the outset for being about to make a longer speech than their lordships were accustomed to hear from him; but he made shorter work of it than any other man would have done. It was in the course of this speech that he uttered the declaration which is, and will continue to be, more remembered than any thing else he ever said. "I am one of those," said the great Captain, "who have probably passed a longer period of my life engaged in war than most men, and principally, I may say, in civil war; and I must say this, that if I could avoid, by any sacrifice whatever, even one month of civil war in the country to which I am attached, I would sacrifice my life in order to do it."¹ In order to do this now, in his absolute conviction that Ireland was on the verge of civil war, the hero of a hundred fights laid down what he cared for much more than his life. Having made up his mind to it, he did it well. His measure was thorough: the grace it gave was almost free; so nearly so, that the opposition made a great laugh out of the securities and restrictions proposed. He said little in the way of personal excuse; and he got the thing done quickly. He would not listen to any plea for a dissolution of Parliament, to any remonstrance about not taking the sense of the country once more. The mass of anti-Catholic petitions showed him what might be the state of turmoil into which the country would be thrown by the question being referred to it; and the existing state of Ireland rendered the times too critical for such an experiment. The will of the Commons was plainly enough declared, and that was constitutional warrant sufficient for him to proceed upon; and, being resolved to carry the matter through, he granted no delay. The opposition in the Commons was swamped by the union of the liberal and the ministerial members,

¹ Hansard, xxxvi. p. 46.

and the majority on the first division was 188 in a House of 508 members. This was on the motion for going into committee on the 5th of March. On the 10th, the Bill was brought in by Mr. Peel, and read a first time. The debate took place on the second reading, which was fixed for the 17th; and the majority the next night was 180 in favor of the Bill.¹ It issued from the committee on the 27th, not one of the many amendments proposed having been carried. There was more debating on the 30th, on occasion of the third reading, when the House did not adjourn till near four o'clock in the morning. The majority was 178 in a House of 462.²

On the same evening, the Premier brought forward the Bill in the Lords, had it read the first time, and fixed the second reading for two days afterwards, in the midst of great clamor about his precipitation. The debate lasted three nights, and issued in a majority of 105 in favor of the Bill; the numbers being 217 for the second reading, and 112 against it.³ It was but nine months since this same House had decided by a majority of 45 against entertaining the question at all,—a proof how rapid and threatening had been the march of events in the meantime. As in the Commons, all the amendments proposed were rejected; and on the 10th of April the Bill passed, by a majority of 213 to 109.⁴

It was not yet law, however; and there were some who did not even now give up all hope that the Bill and the Administration would perish together. Of those who had struggled against the measure, Lord Eldon perhaps had toiled the hardest; and he had worked with a stout heart, because he believed that he had private reasons for hoping that the King would overthrow the policy of his ministers at the very last. "What a consistent career has Lord Eldon's been!" wrote a contemporary at this date; "the ever-active principle of evil in our political world! In the history of the universe, no man has the praise of having effected so much good for his fellow-creatures as Lord Eldon has thwarted."⁵ As he thought this "the most dangerous measure that was ever brought before Parliament," and as he believed that it would inevitably occasion the destruction of the Church, the aristocracy, and the monarchy, it was natural that he should use every art of procrastination, and all possible emphasis of warning, while the measure was in progress; and that he should record his protest, comprehending ten grounds of dissent, on the journals, when all other means of opposition were exhausted: but those who observed him were

Catholic-
Relief Bill
passed.

¹ Hansard, xx. p. 1290.

² Hansard, xx. p. 1638.

³ Hansard, xxi. p. 394.

⁴ Hansard, xxi. p. 694.

⁵ England under Seven Administrations, vol. i. p. 219.

surprised that he appeared to forget his misery at the last. He looked cheerful, and indulged in jocularities; insomuch that Lord Holland, taking up a proverb just quoted by Lord Eldon, said, that, in opposition, he had "come in like a lion, and gone out like a lamb." The secret of this was, that Lord Eldon had been admitted by the King, and, after two very long conversations, was not without hope that the sovereign would, as he called it, do his duty at last,—stand by the constitution, and disappoint the Catholics. We have learned, by the bringing to light of Lord Eldon's private papers, much of what passed in these two interviews; and it is well, for the truth of history, that we know thus much of what the ministers had to struggle with, in their dealings with a sovereign who, according to this record, was as unscrupulous with regard to truth, as he was weak and passionate.

The first interview took place on the 28th of March, two days before the Relief Bill left the Commons; and it lasted about four hours. The King seems to have opened by a statement so manifestly untrue, that Lord Eldon,¹ who "refuted this allegation of the King's" in his private memorandum, must have seen how cautiously he ought to receive the complaints of the present ministers which followed. "His Majesty employed a very considerable portion of time in stating all that he represented to have passed when Mr. Canning was made Minister; and expressly stated, that Mr. Canning would never, and that he had engaged that he would never, allow him to be troubled about the Roman-Catholic question. He blamed all the ministers who had retired upon Canning's appointment; represented, in substance, that their retirement, and not he, had made Canning Minister. He excepted from this blame, in words, myself." This is as foolish as it is clearly false: but His Majesty was not at this time affirming "on the word of a King," but indulging in the fretfulness and helpless anger of a child; in which state men will sometimes, like passionate children, say any thing that their passion suggests. And this helpless being was he who whom his ministers, weighed down by responsibility, had to call master, and to implicate in their work!

"He complained that he had never seen the bills; that the condition of Ireland had not been taken into consideration; that the Association Bill had been passed through both Houses before he had seen it; that it was a very inefficient measure compared to those which he had in vain himself recommended; that the other proposed measures gave him the greatest possible pain and uneasiness; that he was in the state of a person with a pistol presented to his breast; that he had nothing to fall back

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 82.

upon; that his ministers had threatened — I think he said twice, at the time of my seeing him — to resign, if the measures were not proceeded in; and that he had said to them ‘Go on,’ when he knew not how to relieve himself from the state in which he was placed; and that, in one of those meetings, when resignation was threatened, he was urged to the sort of consent he gave by what passed in the interview between him and his ministers, till the interview and the talk had brought him into such a state, that he hardly knew what he was about when he, after several hours, said ‘Go on.’ He then repeatedly expressed himself as in a state of the greatest misery, repeatedly saying, ‘What can I do? I have nothing to fall back upon;’ and musing for some time, and then again repeating the same expression.”¹

It is clear that the King had given his ministers his formal sanction to proceed, on their presenting the alternative of their resigning. It was mere childishness now to say, that he was in such a state that he did not know what he was about; and it is astonishing that he could for a moment think of drawing back, or suppose that Lord Eldon could suggest or sanction such a retractation. This appears to be what he was aiming at throughout these two interviews; but, well as the old Tory would have liked to see the measure destroyed, he could not assume the responsibility of encouraging the King to withdraw his royal word. The whole demeanor of the King appears to convey the impression, that he thought his ministers were doing something wilful and wanton in proposing relief to the Catholics. Throughout the two interviews, he speaks as if the Premier and Mr. Peel had taken it into their heads to gratify the Catholics, purely for the purpose of teasing their sovereign. He thinks and speaks of no one but himself; dwells only on his own annoyance, never even alluding to the state of the Catholics, or of the kingdom at large.

“After a great deal of time spent,” Lord Eldon’s² account continues, “in which His Majesty was sometimes silent, — apparently uneasy; occasionally stating his distress, the hard usage he had received, his wish to extricate himself; that he knew not what to look to, what to fall back upon; that he was miserable beyond what he could express, — I asked him whether His Majesty, so frequently thus expressing himself, meant either to enjoin me, or to forbid me, considering or trying whether any thing could be found or arranged, upon which he *could* fall back. He said, ‘*I neither enjoin you to do so, nor forbid you to do so*; but, for God’s sake, take care that I am not exposed to the humiliation of being again placed in such circumstances, that I must submit again to pray of my present ministers that they will

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 83.

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 84.

remain with me.' He appeared to me to be exceedingly miserable, and intimated that he would see me again."

Within a fortnight after, on the 9th of April, the day before the Bill passed the Lords, the old earl went again to the King, with more addresses. The interview lasted three hours, the first portion of the time being occupied with complaints and expressions of misery uttered in almost the same words as before. At length Lord Eldon spoke, and courageously. He reports:—

"I told him that his late Majesty, when he did not mean that a measure proposed to him should pass, expressed his determination in the most early stage of the business; if it seemed to himself necessary to dissent, he asked no advice about dismissing his ministers. He made that his own act: he trusted to what he had to hope for from his subjects, who . . . could not leave him unsupported; that, on the other hand, there could not but be great difficulties in finding persons willing to embark in office, when matters had proceeded to the extent to which the present measure had been carried,—as was supposed, and had been *represented*,—*after full explanation of them to His Majesty*, and he had so far assented. This led to his mentioning again what he had to say as to his assent. In the former interview it had been represented, that, after much conversation, *twice* with his ministers, or such as had come down, he had said 'Go on;' and upon the latter of *those two* occasions, after many hours' fatigue, and exhausted by the fatigue of conversation, he had said 'Go on.' He now produced *two papers*, which he represented as copies of what he had written to them, *in which he assents to their proceeding and going on with the Bill*, adding certainly in each, as he read them, very strong expressions of the pain and misery the proceedings gave him. It struck me at the time, that I should, if I had been in office, have felt considerable difficulty about going on after reading such expressions; but whatever might be fair observation as to giving, or not, effect to those expressions, *I told His Majesty it was impossible to maintain that his assent had not been expressed*, or to cure the evils which were consequential, after the Bill, in such circumstances, had been read a second time, and in the Lords' House with a majority of 105. This led him to much conversation on that fact, that he had, he said, been deserted by an aristocracy that had supported his father; that, instead of 45 against the measure, there were twice that number of Peers for it; that every thing was revolutionary, every thing was tending to revolution, and the Peers and the aristocracy were giving way to it. They, he said more than once or twice more, supported his father; but see what they had done to *him*. I took the liberty to say that I agreed that matters were tending rapidly to revolution. . . . But I thought it only just to some

of the Peers who voted for the Bill to suppose that they had been led, or misled, to believe that His Majesty had agreed and consented to it. He then began to talk about the coronation oath." It was rather late to be taking that matter to heart, after all the years that had passed, during which he had let it be understood that he should not, in the matter of the oath, follow the example of his father and the Duke of York. When this point was discussed, and it was settled that every man must do as he thinks right in taking any oath, without making any one else responsible, —

"Little more passed, except occasional bursts of expression: 'What can I do? What can I now fall back upon? What can I fall back upon? I am miserable, wretched: my situation is dreadful; nobody about me to advise with. If I do give my assent, I'll go to the baths abroad, and from thence to Hanover; I'll return no more to England; I'll make no Roman-Catholic Peers; I will not do what this Bill will enable me to do; I'll return no more: let them get a Catholic King in Clarence.' I think he also mentioned Sussex. 'The people will see that I did not wish this.' There were the strongest appearances, certainly, of misery. He, more than once, stopped my leaving him. When the time came that I was to go, he threw his arms round my neck, and expressed great misery."

Though Lord Eldon told the King that it was impossible to draw back, he certainly entertained hopes that refusal, or at least delay, might yet be expected. He says, "I certainly thought, when I left him, that he would express great difficulty when the Bill was proposed for the royal assent, — great, but which would be overcome, — about giving it. I fear that it seemed to be given as matter of course." It was with great horror that the old earl heard the conclusion of the business. "April 14, 1829. — The fatal bills received the royal assent Catholic-Relief Bill becomes law. yesterday afternoon. After all I had heard in my visits, not a day's delay! God bless us, and his Church!"¹

What else could the helpless sovereign do, when even his friend, the late Chancellor, told him that he could not draw back? Delay could have done no good, and might have cost him dear. The only thing he could now do was to exhibit his temper towards his ministers, and all friends of the Catholics. He particularly requested the attendance of Lord Eldon at his next levee; and he distinguished him by attentions which contrasted strongly with his coldness towards those who were "in the high places of office." This gracious reception, however, did not make Lord Eldon quite happy. "I was grieved," he says, "that my visit was a visit of duty to a sovereign whose supremacy is

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 87.

shared by that Italian priest, as Shakespeare calls the Pope. But I heard that he much wished it, and I understood that it would be a relief if I would go. . . . He is certainly very wretched about the late business. It is a pity he has not the comfort of being free from blame himself." The King's manner was observed, as he intended it should be. Two days afterwards, Lord Eldon¹ writes: "The universal talk here is about the manner in which the King, at the levee, received the voters for the Catholics, — most uncivilly; markedly so towards the lords spiritual, the bishops who so voted, — and the civility with which he received the anti-Catholic voters, particularly the bishops. It seems to be very general talk now, that his ministers went much beyond what they should have said in Parliament, as to his consent to the measure. Consent, however, he certainly did; but with a language of reluctance, pain, and misery, which, if it had been represented, would have prevented a great deal of that rattling which carried the measure."

Such was the monarch in whose name the ministers were compelled to act, and such the temper and conduct they had to bear with from him. Such was "the first gentleman in England," — casting himself on the neck of his old adviser, bemoaning himself like a child, and indulging himself in persecuting the Peers for their opinions, after having, by his message, demanded their opinions on Catholic relief, and led the way. His gentlemanliness might be very striking to those who were in his presence; but it is not very conceivable to us now, when we find it did not preserve him from agitation and passion, from such despotism as he could use, and from extreme personal rudeness. We hardly know which to wonder at most, — his rebellion against a necessity of which he could not have been ignorant, or his reputation for good-manners.

On looking back to this time, nothing is more surprising than the quietness with which the disfranchisement of the Irish forty-shilling freeholders took place. There were some few who saw and exposed the badness of the proceeding, but they were very few; and the very men who ought to have understood and been faithful to the principle of the case — the very men who, in the same session, spoke and voted for parliamentary reform — helped to extinguish the political liberties of "the forties." Mr. Brougham regarded it as "the almost extravagant price of the inestimable good" which would arise from Catholic emancipation. Sir J. Mackintosh declared it a tough morsel, which he had found it hard to swallow. Lord Duncannon, Lord Palmerston, and Mr. Huskisson, tried another method. They did what argument could do to obtain the ines-

Irish forty-shilling freeholders.

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 88.

timable good, without paying the extravagant price which they did not conceive to be necessary. If they had been duly supported by all the friends of parliamentary reform, there is little doubt that the relief of the Catholics might have been obtained without the sacrifice of so vast an amount of political rights. But among the silent and idle was O'Connell, who threw overboard his beloved "forties," after pledging his life to destruction, and his soul to perdition, if he ever again slighted their liberties; and, in a case where O'Connell so failed, we have little power of censure to spare for meaner offenders.

The two sides of the case were stated to be these: The Irish landlords had split up their estates into small properties for their own political purposes; and the long trains of adherents had followed their great man to the polling-booth, as obediently as sheep go to the water, till the recent period when the forties were secured by O'Connell and the priests on behalf of the Catholic cause. The landlords would now have been glad to be able to undo their work, to consolidate these small properties, and get rid of the forties. But this was a work which can never be undone. No earthquake came to swallow up the forties; no volcano overflowed to fuse their little properties into one. The landlords therefore desired that the men whom they had made freeholders should be disfranchised. They pleaded, and truly, that these multitudes were led by the priests, and that their numbers were so great as to swamp all the rest of the county constituency; so that the representation of the Irish counties would be wholly in the hands of the Catholic leaders. The wish of many landlords was, that the franchise should be restricted within a twenty-pound qualification; but the government would not hear of any thing higher than a ten-pound franchise.

The pleas on the other side were of the iniquity of playing fast and loose in this manner with political liberties, and of treating a merely inconvenient constituency in the same manner as a corrupt one. No corruption, no moral disqualification, was alleged against the forties. They had at first been under the influence of the Protestant landlords, and they were now under that of the Catholic priests; but every principle of political morality taught that the true remedy for such dependence was, not in retrogression, but in promoting the freedom and enlightenment of the class so easily led. There was irreparable mischief in visiting with the same penalties the superstitious voters who were led by their priests, and the corrupt who were bought with gold. As for considerations of expediency, the worst dangers, the only appreciable dangers arising from this large constituency, would be over when the Catholic-Relief Bill was passed. Formidable as the action of this constituency might be when directed

towards objects not yet legalized, it could no longer be mischievous when Catholics had free entrance into Parliament. If every county in Ireland should send Catholic members to Parliament, where was the evil? It could only happen through the real preponderance of Catholics in the constituency, and would afford a fair representation; while the Catholic element in the legislature would still be small in the presence of the Protestantism of the rest of the empire. It ought not to be forgotten, too, by the friends of the Catholics, that their relief had been obtained by this very constituency whom it was now proposed to disfranchise. Those friends of the Catholics were bound by every obligation of principle and feeling to resist such a demolition of political rights as was proposed in return for action so beneficial. But admitting these things in the main, and scarcely attempting to excuse themselves, almost all the friends of the Catholics voted for the disfranchisement of the forties. The Bill for that object accompanied the Catholic-Relief Bill through both Houses, and received the royal assent at the same time. In each House only seventeen voted in favor of the rights of the forties, while the majority in favor of their disfranchisement was 122 in the Lords, and 206 in the Commons.¹ Among the voters, we do not find the names of Mr. Huskisson, and some others who spoke against the Disfranchisement Bill. They contented themselves with stating the grounds of their disapprobation, and then stultified their speeches by voting with the government, or not at all. The quietness with which the decision of Parliament was received in Ireland was a remarkable evidence of the importance of the great measure of relief. Every one was engrossed with that. The Association sat no longer, and could not therefore remonstrate. O'Connell strove to turn away attention from the wrongs of the forties whom he had deserted, and to occupy all minds with the great boon just obtained, and the spectacle of his attempt to take his seat. No one could have believed beforehand, that so sweeping a disfranchisement of any class in society could have taken place with so little remonstrance or threat of retribution.

It was thought by many persons that the dignity of the Catholic-Relief Bill was lowered by its containing a clause
Clare election. evidently intended to exclude Mr. O'Connell from Parliament till he should have been re-elected. There was, perhaps, a strong temptation to show him up to his followers, to whom he had pledged his reputation as a lawyer that he could sit in Parliament without taking the oaths. The point might have been regarded as still disputable, if Mr. O'Connell had been allowed to take his seat, in any manner, without being re-elected;

¹ Hansard, xx. p. 1363; xxi. p. 441.

and therefore the admission to Parliament, by means of the new oath, was limited to the case of "any person professing the Roman-Catholic religion, who shall, after the commencement of this Act, be returned as a member of the House of Commons."¹ The matter was easily settled by this clause; but there were many who thought it a pity that justice should stoop from her height to humble and annoy an individual who was virtually triumphant. The discussion occasioned by Mr. O'Connell's claiming his seat without a new election was considered by the country an extraordinary spectacle; and not a little astonishment was expressed at the difficulty which the House seemed to find in settling the bearings of a law just passed by themselves.

Mr. O'Connell, supported by Lords Ebrington and Duncannon, presented himself to be sworn at the table of the House of Commons, on the 15th of May. He was not, after all, the first Catholic member who so presented himself; for Lord Surrey, the son of the Duke of Norfolk, had been elected for Horsham during the Easter recess, and had taken his seat; but the strongest interest naturally attached to the appearance of Mr. O'Connell. The clerk offered the oath which had been repealed by the late Act; and Mr. O'Connell objected to it, on the ground that it was no longer in force, its repeal being distinctly declared in the new Act. The clerk communicated the objection to the speaker, who had, of course, made up his mind what to do and say. He addressed the House, declaring his opinion, that, the election having taken place under the old law, the oaths imposed by the old law must be taken, to entitle any member to sit in that House. The House might be appealed to by petition from without, or by the question being raised within itself.² Meantime, Mr. O'Connell must withdraw. As soon as Mr. O'Connell had withdrawn, Mr. Brougham moved that he should be recalled, in order to be heard in regard to his claim. Every one was aware that he must be heard. As it required some consideration whether he should be heard at the table or at the bar, the debate was adjourned from the present Friday to Monday, the 18th. On that day, Mr. O'Connell spoke at length at the bar, and astonished some of his hearers as much by the gentlemanly moderation of his tone and manner as by the strength of his pleas. When he finished, opinion was very much divided as to his construction of his case; and some proposed, that, as there appeared even to the lawyers to be doubt, Mr. O'Connell should have the benefit of the doubt, and be at once admitted on taking the new oath. There would, however, have been no real kindness to him and his constituents in so admitting him as to leave

¹ Annual Register, 1829, p. 104.

² Hansard, xxi. p. 1879.

room for any question as to the legality of his position ; and the true reason for the proposal probably was the desire to avoid the excitement of a new Clare election at that time. The Solicitor-general having moved that Mr. O'Connell was not entitled to sit without first taking the oath of supremacy, the question was pressed to a division, when the numbers were 190 to 116 in favor of Mr. O'Connell's exclusion.¹

When Mr. O'Connell appeared at the bar, the next day, to hear the decision of the House, he was asked whether he was ready to take the oath of supremacy. He requested permission to look at the oath ; and, after considering it for a short time, observed, "I see in this oath one assertion, as to a matter of fact, which I know is not true ; and I see in it another assertion, as to a matter of opinion, which I believe is not true. I therefore refuse to take this oath."² Then ensued some discussion as to whether a writ should be issued for a new election, or an Act be passed for the relief of Mr. O'Connell, in order to avoid the excitement of a new election ; but the issue of the writ was agreed to without a division.

Mr. O'Connell was elected without opposition ; but not for this was the language of his addresses and speeches the less violent and outrageous. He left not a moment's doubt in the mind of any one of his intention to keep up agitation in Ireland, by means as indefensible in themselves as ever, while they had no longer the excuse of being the resort of a man under persecution. The atrocity of his language in regard to all English statesmen is scarcely credible now, even when the speeches themselves are before our eyes ; and this incendiarism, of course, appears worse after his having shown how mild and moderate he could appear away from home, and among persons too enlightened to be animated by violent language. He pledged himself to obtain the repeal of every thing objectionable in the new Act, — the disfranchisement of the forties, and the checks upon the increase of monachism in Ireland. He promised every thing the Irish would like to have, if the county of Clare would return him now ; and, among other things, the repeal of the union. From this time the cry of repeal was Mr. O'Connell's tool for cultivating the agitation by which, in regard to mind, fame, and fortune, he lived. From this time he was dishonored in the eyes of all upright men. Up to this time he had had a good cause, and was truly the hero of it. There was many another good cause yet to be advocated for Ireland, of which he might have been the hero, — of which he must have been the hero, if he had had in him any thing of the heroic element. But, from this time, his true glory was extinguished. He rose in influence, power, and

¹ Hansard, xxi. p. 1458.

² Annual Register, 1829, p. 114.

notoriety, to an eminence such as no other individual citizen has attained in modern times in our country; but the higher he rose in these respects, the deeper he sank in the esteem of those whose esteem is essential to the establishment of true fame. Up to this time, he might be a patriot, though his methods were too much those of a demagogue; up to this time, he had a clear, definite, and virtuous aim before him, and he followed it to the point of success: but henceforward he professed aims which were not only unreal, but which he evidently did not expect that rational people could suppose to be real. Henceforward there was no more stability, no more of the dignity which is involved in a noble cause: he made men fear him, court him, groan under him, admire him, and, as regards the ignorant lower class of Irish, adore him; but, from this moment, no man respected him. After his addresses at the second Clare election, there could be no more mistake about O'Connell.

The Catholic Association assembled again, under the name of an "aggregate meeting" of the Catholics, to promote the re-election of Mr. O'Connell. The rent was still in existence; a large balance of its funds being in the hands of the treasurers, and disposable only at the bidding of the body which had collected it. Five thousand pounds of this money were voted towards the expenses of the new elections.¹ On the 30th of July, Mr. O'Connell was returned without opposition, nearly a month after Parliament had risen; so that he did not take his seat till the opening of the next session, — February, 1830.

Here, then, we have witnessed the close of one of the most important controversies which ever agitated society in any age or country. In significance it perhaps yields Prospects of Ireland. to no social controversy whatever; in importance it must, of course, yield to some few great organic questions which concern essential principles of government. It must be considered as of less importance, for instance, in a large view, than the question of reform of Parliament. But it was practically, and on a near view, of more pressing urgency than any other, or than all others put together; and, under the pressure of this urgency, men generally judged amiss of the issues, — as men are wont to do in circumstances so critical. The No-popery terrorists were scarcely more mistaken in their anticipations of woe and destruction from the emancipation of the Catholics, than the liberal politicians of the time were in their expectations of the contentment and tranquillity which were to ensue in Ireland. The last reasonably laughed at the hobgoblin images of the Pope and the Jesuits, which the London Tories and Irish Orangemen conjured up, to frighten themselves and everybody else whom they could

¹ Annual Register, 1829, p. 125.

alarm : they reasonably insisted on the impossibility of doing any thing for Ireland till this measure of relief should be granted ; but they unreasonably went further in their expectations, and concluded that the tranquillity of Ireland would follow from the measure of relief. Mr. O'Connell had said that it would ; but all who looked at the aspect of affairs for themselves, setting at naught the word of Mr. O'Connell as it deserved, saw that Mr. O'Connell never meant that Ireland should be tranquillized ; and that, if he had wished for her tranquillization ever so earnestly, he could not have effected it. A sudden change in the law could not make a permanent change in the temper of a nation, — even of a nation which knew how to reverence law. But, by the Irish, the function and the value of law had never been understood ; and it was now Mr. O'Connell's daily and nightly care, that the people should not be the better disposed towards the law for its having become favorable to them. In his popular addresses at this time, we find the pervading thought and purpose to be, inducing the people to distrust and despise legislation. He told them that he had got the new law for them, and could get as much more as he liked ; and he represented the whole administration of law and justice in Ireland as purposely hostile to them, and to be regarded only for the sake of safety, whether in the form of obedience or evasion. He advocated, both by precept and example, a wholly empirical method of political and social existence, instead of using his efforts to bring society into a tranquil organic state. Accordingly, the relief measure appeared to produce no effect whatever upon the temper and troubles of Ireland. A multitude of Catholics found themselves deprived of the franchise ; and landlords, Protestant and Catholic, found the value of their property much diminished by the operation of the same provision. The Orangemen became more furious and bigoted, through fear and jealousy of their triumphant neighbors ; and those triumphant neighbors were urged on by their leaders to insufferable insolence towards the government and sister-nation which had granted them relief no longer possible to be withheld. The list of Irish outrages, the pictures of Irish crime, which follow, in the registers of the time, the record of Catholic emancipation, are very painful ; but they show, not that there was any thing wrong in the procedure of relief, but that it had been too long delayed. There could not have been stronger evidence that a less generous measure would have done no good, and much mischief. As it was, there was no room for regret that the right thing had been done at last, and done in the freest and amplest spirit and manner. If there was any cause for regret, it was that it had not been done long before ; and also that even its promoters should so little understand the

operation of tyrannical restrictions as to believe that their effects would cease with their existence. Injury may be forgiven, and even forgotten; insult may be forgiven, though perhaps never forgotten: but the temper and character generated under insult and injury cannot, by any process, be changed at once into a healthful condition of trustfulness, integrity, and good-humor. The emancipators of the Catholics, therefore, had to put up with a different fate from that which had been predicted for them by the true patriots and best political prophets, who had anticipated a brighter coming time for Ireland. They had not grateful Ireland at their feet, relieved from the raging demon, — calm, clothed, and right in mind; but, on the contrary, it could scarcely be seen whether or no the demon was really cast out. There was no gratitude, no peace, no trust, no inclination to alliance for great common objects. But then, on the other hand, there was infinite relief in the sense of the removal of wrong, in safety from revolution and civil war, in consciousness that the way was now clear for the regeneration of Ireland, — clear as far as the political conscience of England was concerned. Ireland was not, under her new emancipation, what her Grattans and Plunkets had expected; nor what the Cannings and Broughams, and Wellingtons and Peels, had hoped to see her: but it was enough for support that the right act was done, and that the grand obstruction of all was removed; though so many more were found to exist, that, after a lapse of twenty years, we see no end to them yet.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Catholic question was so engrossing to the mind of the whole nation, that the records of the year present few notices of other subjects. In connection with it, however, some incidents occurred which are worthy of note.

When the House of Lords assembled after the Easter holidays, on the 28th of April, there was an unusually full attendance; and many ladies were present, in expectation of a very interesting spectacle. On the entrance of a group of persons who proceeded to the table, there was a profound silence; amidst which, three Catholic peers — the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Clifford, and Lord Dormer — took the oaths.¹ They had obtained entrance at last to the legislative assembly where their fathers sat and ruled when their faith was that of the whole land. In those days, the cathedrals were theirs, and the universities and the crown and the legislature, — all the “thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers,” of the civilized world; and now, here was a little remnant of the old Catholic peerage re-entering upon the function of government under a sad reduction of pomp and circumstance. To the student of history and the antiquarian, the spectacle was one of deep and somewhat melancholy interest; but the more ignorant among the possessors of power looked upon these peers of ancient lineage as a sort of intruders, — as the newest order of upstarts, whose admission vulgarized their Protestant legislature, while endangering its Protestantism. Here, however, was the hereditary Earl-marshal of England present once more as a Peer of Parliament; and he and his companions were soon after joined by more of their own faith. On the 1st of May, Lords Stafford, Petre, and Stourton took the oaths and their seats. Soon after, Lord Eldon paid a visit to two melancholy duchesses, who showed him their vast collections of Protestant speeches, protestations, and pledges, — “some in gold letters” — which, in better days, the ladies had taken for an ample security that no Catholic would ever sit as a legislator; but their sympathizing old friend told them they might now throw all those valued securities into the fire. One

¹ Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 82.

of these ladies was the wife of "the young Duke of Richmond, who did very well in all he said during the debates" against the admission of the Catholics, and in opposition to the Ministry. Though he failed in his object, he was not without his reward for his opposition. "I hear," writes Lord Eldon,¹ "that he is a great favorite with the King; which seems not to be the fortune, be it good or bad, at this moment, of those addicted to his ministers."

In the same cause, Sir Charles Wetherell, the Attorney-general, had made sacrifices. The Administration had ^{Changes in} hoped that he would at least have kept silence on their ^{the Ministry.} great measure, though he had refused to prepare the Bill; but he held it dishonest to keep silence, threw his whole powers into opposition, and of course was immediately dismissed from his office, in which he was succeeded by Sir James Scarlett, who had been Attorney-general under Mr. Canning. Another change was occasioned by the retirement of the Lord High Admiral, the Duke of Clarence, who was thought, by the straightforward and simple-mannered Premier, to have mixed up too much of the popularity-seeking of the heir-presumptive with the business of his office. There had been a vast deal of jaunting and cruising about, presenting of colors, preparation of shows on sea and land, which appeared to the Duke of Wellington to be more expensive and foolish than in any way serviceable; and it is believed that the retirement of the Lord High Admiral was caused by a plain expression of the Premier's opinion on this matter. It is said, that, on a long account for travelling expenses being sent into the treasury by the Lord High Admiral, the Duke of Wellington indorsed the paper, "No travelling expenses allowed to the Lord High Admiral," and dismissed it. The health of the Duke of Clarence was unsatisfactory at this time, — enough so to justify his retirement without other cause. His office merged again into that of First Lord of the Admiralty, which was held by Lord Melville, who was succeeded at the Board of Control by Lord Ellenborough. It was believed at the time, that the Ministers would have liked to offer the privy seal to Lord Grey, but that the King could not be asked to approve of it. Lord Grey's time was approaching; but it was not quite yet. Meantime, the ministers "took Lord Rosslyn, as another Whig."²

While waiting for Lord Grey, however, the subject of parliamentary reform was not dropped. It was brought ^{Parliamentary} forward on the 2d of June, in an extraordinary ^{reform.} manner. The Marquis of Blandford declared himself unhappy in the thought, that the "borough-market" was now so thrown open to Catholics, as that there was no longer any security for the liberties of Englishmen, or for the prosperity of their manufactures

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 94.

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 92.

and commerce. Such an influx of Catholics into Parliament might be secured by the purchase of boroughs, as that the voice of the nation might be silenced, and Protestantism extinguished. The mover brought forward two resolutions, — one declaring that there existed boroughs and small constituencies which might be bought for money; and the other, that the continuance of such boroughs, and of such practices in them, was disgraceful and injurious in every way. The resolutions were negatived by a majority of 74 in a House of 184. The debate, and the occurrence which excited it, occasioned great amusement to the Liberal party in the House;¹ and Mr. William Smith observed, that “one effect, he was happy to find, had been produced by the Roman-Catholic-Relief Bill, — an effect which its best friends had not anticipated: it appeared to have transformed a number of the highest Tories in the land to something very nearly resembling Radical reformers.

A few days before the Relief Bill went up to the Lords,

Duel.

the whole country was electrified by the news that the Prime Minister had fought a duel on account of the Bill, or rather on the implication of his honor in the Bill. These were days when foolish men were more foolish, and hasty men more hasty, than usual; and a very foolish and hasty charge against the Duke of Wellington, of designs to overthrow the Church and constitution under false pretences, was put forth in the newspapers, in a letter from Lord Winchilsea to the Secretary of the Committee for establishing King's College, London.² It is generally agreed that gentlemen must judge for themselves about the requisitions of their honor; but it certainly appeared to the great majority of the nation rather amusing, that the Duke of Wellington should think it any more necessary to vindicate himself against a clumsy charge of secret conspiracy against the constitution, than to show his courage by fighting a duel. A graver question was, whether it could be justifiable in the head of the government to risk his life, at a juncture so extraordinary, in a personal quarrel. The Duke gives his own view in the letter to Lord Winchilsea which contains his challenge. Every effort had been used to induce the earl to make reparation for his calumnious expressions; which he refused to do, unless the Duke would explain how long he had entertained his present political views: a requisition wholly absurd on the face of it. “The question for me now to decide is this,” the Duke wrote on the 20th of March: “Is a gentleman who happens to be the King's Minister to submit to be insulted by any gentleman who thinks proper to attribute to him disgraceful or criminal motives for his conduct as an individual? I cannot doubt of the decision which

¹ Hansard, xxi. p. 1688.

² Annual Register, 1829, Chron. p. 58.

I ought to make on this question. Your Lordship is alone responsible for the consequences." The earl did not choose to be responsible for the death of the Prime Minister of England, at a most critical time in the history of the country; and perhaps he was conscious of wrong. After receiving the Duke's fire uninjured, he fired in the air; and then permitted his second to deliver to the second of the Duke of Wellington a declaration of regret and retraction, which he caused to be published in the newspapers. It was an absurd affair; but it might have cost the nation dear.

The distress among the silk-weavers being extreme this year, an attempt was made in Parliament to procure a reversal of the free-trade policy of Mr. Huskisson.¹ It was Silk duties. so plainly shown, however, that, whatever the distress might have been in any case, it was aggravated to excess by the ignorance and violence of the unhappy operatives, that the agitation of the subject produced an issue the reverse of that which had been hoped. It was shown, that at Coventry the hand-loom weavers were thrown out of work by the introduction of machinery, which, instead of learning to use, they attempted to destroy. The London silk-weavers struck for wages which could not be obtained, and destroyed by night the webs and material of workmen who would not join the strike. To revert to the old restrictive policy could be no remedy for evils like these. Instead of this, the duties on raw silk were again lowered, amidst prophecies of ruin within the House; and outside,—in Bethnal Green and Spitalfields,—scenes of fierce riot, which Mr. Peel declared that he knew to be intended to intimidate the House from lowering the duties.

The budget occupied little time and attention this session. The report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was, The budget. on the whole, favorable; but the surplus was not greater than was required to be set apart for the reduction of the national debt, and there was therefore no diminution of taxation.

A Bill passed the Commons this session for legalizing the sale of game. It came up to the Lords supported by Game laws. the unanimous suffrage of the Lower House. Lord Wharncliffe set before the Peers such an array of facts in regard to the corrupting and disorganizing effects of the game-laws, as must, one would have thought, have procured a unanimous vote for their modification or repeal from any body of men whatever. But Lord Westmoreland soon showed that there was to be an opposition. He declared that the Bill "would depopulate the country of gentlemen."² This sounded very fearful; for the worst

¹ Hansard, xxi. p. 744.

² Hansard, xxi. p. 1592.

that had been apprehended hitherto was, that even the total repeal of the game-laws "would depopulate the country of" hares and pheasants. His lordship "was sure that the friends of liberty in the other House must have been asleep when this Bill passed." And now Lord Eldon seems to have thought, that the friends of liberty—that is, of aristocratic sports—were napping in a little too much security in the Lords' House. He¹ speaks of his own opposition to the measure, and says, "The Prime Minister opposed this Bill also, and we old Tories thought ourselves safe in our views of defeating it; but many of the old Tories, being very much out of humor, would not buckle to: and the Whigs, the old opposition, all sticking together, and, I suppose, courting popularity with the lower orders by their vote, let the Duke have something like a proof that they were mightier than he; and so he was in a minority." The Bill was read a second time by a majority of ten: but the Peers took more care of their "liberty" next time; and the majority—of two—was on the other side. The jail must still be crowded with peasants sent to that school of crime for catching wild animals: the life of a hare or a pheasant must still be protected more carefully than the character and liberty of a man; and still, while hundreds of thousands of the working classes were sinking into disease and death from want of bread, the game of noblemen was to be encouraged to eat and destroy food to the value of 5,000,000*l.* in a year. The Bill would have done little in comparison with the reform which was then, and is still, needed; but that little was refused by the lords of the soil, who could not have fully known what they were doing, but who preferred liberty of sporting to the trouble of inquiring. Lord Eldon's language shows that he was aware that the game-laws were disliked by "the lower orders:" but he was notoriously fond of shooting; and it seems not to have occurred to him, nor to some wiser and better men than he, that it is dangerous to pursue an aristocratic amusement at the expense of disgusting the middle, and corrupting and exasperating the "lower orders" of their countrymen. This subject comes up again and again in the recent history of England; and, even yet, the sportsmen in Parliament have not laid aside their tone of levity on a matter which has in it all the seriousness that can attach to any political topic whatever. While reviewing the course and issue of other great questions, the mind occasionally reverts to this yet pending one, with some wonder, whether in this case, as in so many preceding, there will be insolence, levity, and blindness to the last moment, to be succeeded by panic, rapid conversion, and precipitate legislation. Such a speculation may be laughed at by those who look at the

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 94.

game-law question as one of liberty of sporting, regarding merely the pleasures and privileges of gentlemen, and the lives of hares and birds; but there is another side to it, as we shall have occasion to see hereafter. The true and permanent aspect of the question is that in which it regards the feeding or robbing the hungry; the deterioration or improvement of the land; the filling or emptying of our prisons; the increase or diminution of crime; the oppression or redemption of a million of rural laborers: one might say, the very existence of society as it is, and is to be. Of course, the game-laws will give way, sooner than our social organization: but the two cannot much longer exist together; and, when the sportsmen in Parliament attain to seeing this, the grave aspect of the question will present itself to them, as it does now to those who foresee the end. Meantime, we have noted one of the first attacks on the aristocratic privileges of the gun; and the kind of thought, speech, and temper which the attack called forth.

One of the most interesting debates of the session was on the subject of our relations with the Queen of Portugal. The conduct of England in preserving her neutrality as to the *de facto* government of Portugal had been Relations with Portugal. apparently so strange as to cause eager and angry discussion, not only on the continent, and on the other side of the Atlantic, but in the British Parliament. It is well that cases of such extreme nicety in regard to international honor occur now and then, embarrassing as they may be at the moment; for so close an appeal to principles is good for the national conscience, and a noble exercise for the national rulers. Seldom has there been a case more trying to flesh and blood than the one before us, or more honorable to the conscience of the government. Thus, at least, is the matter regarded now, at a distance of twenty years, though at the time it was difficult for the majority to enter into the motives of a conduct apparently contradictory.

In August, 1828, Lord Aberdeen had been applied to by the Portuguese refugees for permission to send a large quantity of arms and ammunition from England to Brazil. The Minister replied, that permission would be granted on a pledge from the applicants that the arms and ammunition should not be employed in the civil dissensions in Portugal, in which England was bound, as a neutral power, not to interfere. The pledge was offered; Count Itabayana declaring that he could give a clear and precise reply, that there was no intention of employing these stores in the civil dissensions of Portugal. Yet the arms and powder were immediately conveyed, not to Brazil, but to Terceira. Terceira, the largest island of the Azores, which are under the dominion of Portugal, had declared in favor of the young Queen, and driven

off the troops of Don Miguel. The sending these arms there in such a mode awakened the suspicions of our government, that men would soon be sent after them; and thus the island would be garrisoned and strengthened by England for war against the actual ruler of Portugal: a proceeding which would have been a direct breach of neutrality. In October, application was made for a conveyance for the Portuguese troops to Terceira. The reply of the Duke of Wellington was, that "England was determined to maintain a neutrality in the civil dissensions of Portugal; and that the King, with that determination, could not permit the ports and arsenals of England to be made places of equipment for hostile armaments."¹ He intimated, also, that the four thousand Portuguese troops could not be allowed to remain in any English port, as a military body, ready for action. All needful hospitality should be shown them; but they must disband, and distribute themselves over the neighboring towns and villages, or wherever they pleased, and not remain concentrated in Plymouth. The answer was, that, sooner than separate and dissolve their military organization, they would go to Brazil. The Duke's reply was, that we did not wish to send them away, but that they could repair to Brazil if they chose; and a British convoy was offered to protect them from Portuguese cruisers. This convoy was declined. In the next December, application was made for permission and means of transport to send the refugees, unarmed, to Terceira; and this was refused, on the ground of the former deception. The applicants were told, "We have been already deceived: you profess to sail as unarmed men, but you will find arms on your arrival at Terceira." The profession then, on the part of the Portuguese leaders, was, that they were going to Brazil; but the government were aware that they sailed with false clearances, which were obtained at the custom-house as for Gibraltar, for Virginia, and for other places.² The expedition consisted of four vessels, which carried 652 officers and men, under the command of General Count Saldanha, who had been the Portuguese War-minister under the constitution. Distinct notice had been given to the heads of the expedition, that any attempt to land at Terceira would be prevented; and that a British force would be found ready for the purpose, stationed off the island.

A small force of armed vessels had, in fact, been despatched under the command of Captain Walpole, of the "*Ranger*," with instructions to cruise off the island, and to inform the Portuguese under Saldanha, if they appeared, that he had authority to prevent their landing.³ "And," continued the

¹ Hansard, xxi. p. 1633.

² Annual Register, 1829, p. 188.

³ Hansard, xxi. p. 1635.

instructions, "should they persist, notwithstanding such warning, in hovering about, or in making any efforts to effect a landing, you are then to use force to drive them away from that neighborhood, and keep sight of them until you shall be convinced by the course they may steer, and the distance they may have proceeded, that they have no intention of returning to the Western Islands." As Captain Walpole was keeping his watch, on the 16th of January, off Port Praya, in Terceira, the expedition appeared. The vessel which carried Saldanha came first. It paid no attention to the two shots fired by the "Ranger" to bring them to; and appeared resolved to push into port at all hazards. Captain Walpole was compelled to fire; and his shot killed one man, and wounded another. That single shot echoed round the world; and it was years before the reverberation died away. Everybody, in all countries, who did not know what had passed unseen, asked what this could mean. England had received the young Queen and her adherents with all hospitality and encouragement; had withdrawn her ambassador from Lisbon on the avowal of Don Miguel's usurpation; and now was firing upon the young Queen's troops, when they were entering the port of an island which had remained faithful to her. The most mortifying comment was that of the usurper. Don Miguel announced in the "Lisbon Gazette," that "the conduct of England towards Portugal, in such circumstances, had been above all praise."¹ The steady reply of the English government was, that we were not at war with Portugal; and we should not go to war with Portugal while her conflicts were civil. Our obligations were to defend her, on her own appeal, against foreign aggression; and beyond these obligations we would not go. Our immediate business was to preserve our neutrality.

Captain Walpole's shot compelled Saldanha to a conference, at the end of which he declared that he considered the whole expedition prisoners to the English. Captain Walpole took care not to indicate the direction in which the Portuguese should depart; and he told them to go where they pleased; only not to stay where they were. They sailed westwards; and he followed them, Saldanha keeping up the affectation of supposing him the captor of the expedition. On the 24th, when the vessels were within five hundred miles of Scilly, Captain Walpole thought it time to put an end to this pretence, lest any color should be afforded, by their simultaneous arrival in the Channel, to the charge that England had violated her neutrality, to the injury of the constitutional cause. He therefore sent to ask Saldanha where he was going. Saldanha expressed astonishment at the question, and said that prisoners of war always went wherever

¹ Annual Register, 1829, p. 191.

their captors chose to lead them. Captain Walpole, declaring that Saldanha's conduct determined him to escort the expedition no further, turned back to Terceira, where he intercepted another vessel charged with Portuguese officers, and fitted out from London. The vessel was just about to enter Port Praya. Captain Walpole supplied her with water and provisions, and bade her go. The case of the Portuguese does seem hard when viewed by itself; but their repeated deceptions show their own consciousness that they had no right to involve a neutral power, whose hospitality they were receiving, in their political conflicts. If they had brought their vessels and stores from Portugal or Brazil, or from any country beyond the limit of Portuguese alliance, it would have been well and good; but their conduct, however palliated by the temptation and distress of their circumstances, was not such as the English government could allow to pass unrebuked and unexplained.

Don Miguel's conduct was not such as to permit any reasonable person to suppose that the English government could have any partiality on his behalf. He set aside the sentences of the courts on political prisoners when they were not severe enough to please him; and actually caused death to be inflicted by his own mere order, when transportation had been decreed by the judges. He imprisoned multitudes, and confiscated their goods to himself without any pretence of law; and even attempted the life of his sister, the late Regent, with his own hand. The princess was suspected by him of having sent a servant to England, with money and jewels, to save her property from his rapacious grasp. He rushed, armed, into her chamber, and demanded an account of the departure of this servant. When she did not reply, he rushed upon her with a bayonet which was fixed upon a pistol in his hand. She grappled with him, and actually threw him down. He sprang up, and again attacked her; but by this time her chamberlain was in the way. Don Miguel stabbed the chamberlain in the arm, and fired his pistol at the princess. The ball killed a servant by her side; but she was rescued by other servants, who came at the noise of the scuffle. Under such a sovereign, Portugal indeed deserved the pity expressed for her misfortunes in the King's speech, delivered by commission, at the close of the session of 1829, on the 24th of June: "It is with increased regret that His Majesty again adverts to the condition of the Portuguese monarchy. But His Majesty commands us to repeat his determination to use every effort to reconcile conflicting interests, and to remove the evils which press so heavily upon a country, the prosperity of which must ever be an object of His Majesty's solicitude."¹

¹ Hansard, xxi. p. 1831.

The speech announced, in decorous terms, that the war with Turkey was turned over to Russia. Ambassadors from France and England were on their way to Constantinople; and Russia had not, on account of her own quarrel with the Porte, withdrawn her name from the negotiations for the final pacification of Greece. The King thanked his Parliament for their attention to the affairs of Ireland and the Catholics, which he had especially recommended to their deliberations; and sincerely hoped that the important measures they had passed would tranquilize Ireland, and draw closer the bonds of union between her and the rest of the empire.

The King was not gone to the German baths and Hanover, leaving "Clarence" or "Sussex" to be King of the Catholics. He remained in seclusion at Windsor, Brighton, or London. It was generally understood that he was ill, and universally suspected that he was very miserable. The close of his unhappy life was now not far off; and the state of certain foreign affairs troubled him almost as much as the achievements of his own ministers and Parliament at home.

CHAPTER IX.

It was about the political state of France that the King and ministers of England were troubled at the close of the year 1829. By that time, indeed, their relations of sympathy with the government of France were becoming the cause of more reasonable anxiety than even feelings of mutual hostility could have been. To understand this, we must look back a little.

At the time when Mr. Canning sent British troops to Portugal to repel aggressions from Spain, which were supported by France, there were three parties in France by whom England was very differently regarded. In 1827, indeed, there was such disorder in the political state of France, that there was scarcely any subject on which the three great parties were not in bitter enmity against each other; and Mr. Canning's foreign policy was naturally a prominent topic.

The French King and his government justified England, in word, as well as by the act of recalling their own ambassadors from Madrid, on occasion of Ferdinand's interference with Portugal. But they had their cause of quarrel with Mr. Canning. They vehemently resented his expressions about the occupation of Spain by the French in 1823; about his method of baffling her policy by separating the South-American Colonies from Spain; and about the power which would be wielded by England in the event of a war of opinion in Europe. This ruling party, called the Moderate-royalist party, was, in 1827, supposed to be the strongest. The other two were the Ultra-royalist, which would have supported Ferdinand through every thing, would have placed and upheld Don Miguel on the throne of Portugal, would have made the Jesuits masters of education in France, and which hated England to the last extremity; and the Liberal party, which justified Mr. Canning throughout, and sought to make their own liberties approximate to those of England.

Men could hardly tell, at the commencement of the session of 1827, how to account for the agitation and turbulence pervading society in France, of which every one was sensible. Everybody was expecting that something fearful would

Affairs of
France.

Social in-
titude.

happen soon; yet no one seemed to know why. The Minister Villèle was extremely unpopular; but this appeared to be rather on account of something he was expected to do, than from any thing he had yet done. The financial statement of the session was very favorable. It came out afterwards that it was delusive, and that the condition of the people in the Provinces was deplorable; but this was not yet understood in Paris. From some unknown cause, every thing seemed thrown out of its course, so that events were no longer calculable, nor political bodies reliable. In the preceding session, the Minister had been perplexed by the new Chamber of Peers, where he had supposed he might have altogether his own way.¹ The Peers had rejected his project of a kind of law of primogeniture, and had refused to tolerate the presence of the Jesuits in establishments of public instruction. The other Chamber sank in the national estimation from day to day; and, in proportion, the Liberal party within it rose into strength and influence. The newspaper press harassed the Minister by its unremitting hostility; while the journals, which he held at his disposal, had scarcely any readers. The Minister saw that he must either resign, or put down the press. Unhappily for himself and his trust, he chose the latter course; and here was the first thunder-clap of the tempest whose distant mutterings had held the nation in dread.

During the preceding year, the bishops had been urgent with the government to restrain the licentiousness of the press, and the ministerial majority of the Chamber of Deputies had carried addresses for the same object; and now, at the opening of the session, a Bill was brought in, which must have gratified the expectations of the bishops and the Tory deputies to the utmost.² This Bill was the production of Peyronnet, Keeper of the Seals, and Minister of Justice. Hitherto the law had provided that five copies of every new work should be deposited in the appropriate government department. But this deposit was made at the moment of publication, allowing no time for revision by the police, — a purpose never contemplated in the arrangement. Now, it was to be enacted, that no work of twenty sheets and under should be exposed for sale, or be allowed, in any portion, to leave the printing-office, till five complete days had elapsed from the period of deposit; nor any work of above twenty sheets, till after the expiration of ten days. The penalties were fines and confiscation of the edition. So much for works not periodical. As for periodicals, cheapness was to be done away with by the imposition of heavy stamps. The publication of the political journals was to be rendered almost impossible by

Law of the
press.

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1827, p. 1.

² *Annuaire*, 1827, p. 53.

restrictions as to proprietorship and editorship; and all proprietors whose case did not come within the conditions of the new law — all women, minors, and partners, beyond the number of five — were to find their property in journals extinguished within thirty days from the passing of the law, unless they could previously accomplish a forced sale. Fines and other punishments, and stamp-duties, were heavily augmented. A fine of five hundred francs (about 21*l.*) was ordained for every article relating to the private life of any Frenchman living, or any foreigner resident in France, without express permission being obtained from the individual noticed; and, lest there should be any remissness in such individuals, from a dislike to bringing their private affairs under the notice of the courts, it was provided that the public prosecutor might take up the case, if the aggrieved party did not.¹

It is worth while giving this brief sketch of Peyronnet's atrocious law of the press, to show what the Bourbon government of France was in its latter day. The wickedness of bringing forward such a law in the nineteenth century can be equalled only by the folly and blindness of the venture. The King and his ministers might as reasonably and hopefully have proposed to put a padlock on the tongue of every Frenchman.

The Chamber would hardly listen to the description of the law when it was proposed. One of the deputies, M. Casimir Périer, quitting his seat, exclaimed, "You might as well propose a law for the suppression of printing in France, for the benefit of Belgium." Shouts of surprise and indignation burst forth at intervals; and, at the close of Peyronnet's speech, there was too much confusion to permit the continuance of business. Of course, the journals all came out furiously the next day; all except the ministerial papers, which nobody read. At the earliest possible moment, petitions began to pour in from the remotest of the Provinces. The most striking, however, of the myriad of remonstrances called forth by the occasion, was that of the French Academy. It was particularly striking on account of the undue subservience to royalty for which that great society was notorious. But this law was too obviously injurious to the interests of science and literature to be allowed to pass without the strongest protest that could be offered by the association which represented the science and literature of France. Of the 28 members who attended the discussion as to what should be done, 18 voted for the remonstrance, and 4 went away without voting; leaving only 6 in favor of keeping quiet under the infliction. M. Michaud was one of the speakers who exposed the consequences of the law; and the three members who were charged with the preparation of the remonstrance were MM. Chateaubriand, Lacratelle,

¹ *Annuaire*, 1827, pp. 70-77.

and Villemain. The next day, Villemain was deprived of his office in the Privy-council; and the government newspaper announced that M. Michaud was no longer one of the readers to the royal family, nor M. Lacratelle dramatic censor. Crowds immediately assembled before the houses of these three gentlemen, thus dismissed from office; and subscriptions were set on foot for the publication of works which it was known that they were preparing.¹ The Director of the Academy requested an audience of the King, to present the memorial; and the King refused to see the Director of the Academy. He could not yet, however, prevent the French nation seeing the remonstrance; for it was published, and spread far and wide.

Though the government was more powerful in the Chamber of Deputies — of which it had controlled the elections — than anywhere else, it had a severe struggle to obtain a majority in the committee which was to consider the Bill; and, after all, the provisions of the law were so altered and softened that the Minister hardly knew his own Bill when it came forth from committee. He obtained the restoration of some of its original clauses; and the Bill was sent up to the Peers by a majority of 233 votes to 134. It was commonly said, that, if it passed the Peers, not more than three or four journals would continue to appear in Paris; and the ministers took no pains to conceal that this was exactly what they wished.

While the Peers were occupied with the Bill, the deputies were invited to pass a measure to secure themselves against newspaper reporters. Speech was to be repressed in every direction. Men were not silenced yet, however; and they made the King aware of their opinions. The committee of the Peers began their work by calling before them the chief printers and booksellers of Paris, to give evidence as to the probable operation of the law, if passed.² Putting this together with the fact, that, of the seven who composed the committee, four were of liberal politics, the government must have seen pretty clearly what the result was likely to be. Just at that time (April 16), the King reviewed some of his troops and the National Guard; and the ominous silence with which he was received seems to have struck upon his heart. He called his ministers to council the next day, and declared his will that the Bill for the regulation of the press should be withdrawn. It is said that Peyronnet's appearance in the Chamber of Deputies on this 17th of April was really forlorn. He was embarrassed; his voice faltered; and the listening members could scarcely catch the words of the royal ordinance. They were immediately repeated loudly enough, however. The thirty thousand journeymen who would have been deprived of

¹ *Annuaire*, 1827, p. 61.

² *Annuaire*, 1827, p. 147.

bread by the passage of this law, caught up the news, and spread it over Paris; and the whole city was presently blazing with illuminations and fireworks. The rejoicings of the people were regarded by the ministers as manifestations of revolutionary tendencies; and no one member of the Administration as yet offered to resign.

It had been arranged, before this issue, that the King should review the National Guard on the 29th of April, "in token of his satisfaction at their zeal in his honor, on the anniversary of his return to Paris." Some doubt had arisen in regard to the loyalty of a portion of this popular force; and there was a question whether the review should take place in the court of the Tuileries,—which was not the most popular locality. The King, however, declined to alter the announcement given; and the occasion was prepared for, as a great fête-day. When the King appeared, surrounded by his brilliant staff, and followed by the whole royal family, none but loyal cries were heard; but, after a time, a voice here and there from the ranks shouted, "Down with the ministers!"—"Down with the Jesuits!"¹ The officers and comrades of those who thus shouted, strove to silence them; but in vain. The King was heard to say, in a tone of great dignity, "I came here to receive homage, and not admonitions." Upon this arose a great shout of, "Long live the King!" but the disloyal cries were renewed and multiplied. The King would have borne with them, as is known by his having formally signified his satisfaction with the state of the Guard, and the ceremonial of the day; but his ministers could not forgive their share. The cries were uttered, with great rage, under their windows: they went to the King, to hold council, and sat late into the night. Before daylight, the royal and ministerial order for the disbanding of the National Guard was received by its commandant; and, before seven in the morning, all the posts of the Guard were occupied by troops of the line.

Two days after the close of the session, in June, the old censorship of 1820–21 was brought into action. Every one expected this; but nobody was the less angry. In August, government took offence at the orations and ceremonies which signalized the funeral of a deputy who had been expelled from the Chamber in 1823, and prosecuted the printers and publishers of the report of the funeral. The speakers and reporters came forward to acknowledge their share in the matter. All the parties were prosecuted; and all authors, speakers, publishers, and printers were acquitted, and the confiscated copies of the pamphlet ordered to be restored. Lafayette, who was one of these parties, made a kind of political progress through France; and

¹ *Annuaire*, 1827, pp. 151, 152.

he damaged the government, at every stage of his journey, by a plain narrative of its policy of the year. The King was travelling at the same time. He visited the camp at St. Omer; was loyally received; enjoyed the spectacle of the improved condition of his people, — which was, in truth, very miserable, — since he visited the same regions in his younger days; and returned to Paris, fancying that all was well.¹

The next proceeding of the government remains inexplicable. The Chamber of Deputies was more devoted to them than any future one could be expected to be; yet they dissolved it this autumn. They spared no effort to manage and control the elections; and their power of doing so was very great. But they had brought on a crisis which was too strong for them; and the new elections were fatal to the Villèle Ministry. The Ultra-royalists and Liberals made a junction for the occasion, and returned a motley assemblage of deputies, whose only point of agreement seemed to be hostility to Villèle and his comrades. In Paris itself, every ministerial candidate was thrown out. At the moment of dissolving the Chamber of Deputies, the King had declared the creation of seventy-six new Peers in a batch. The Peers, having been unmanageable, were now to be swamped. In the new batch were found the only archbishops (five) who were not Peers before, and the most slavish of the creatures of the government who had been thrust into the late assemblage of deputies.

The King and his Minister were among the last to perceive that these measures would not do, — that they were intolerable: but they discovered it at last; and, on the 4th of January, Villèle resigned.

The people of Paris were on the watch. On occasion of the election returns, towards the end of November, there had been serious troubles in Paris; and it was at this time, as far as we are aware, that the first mention of barricades occurs.² Some of the rioters, we are told, pursued by the patrol, raised barricades by means of the masons' tools and hewn stones which they found near the Church St. Leu, where some new houses were in process of construction. It is two years and a half after this that we find, in our own "Annual Register,"³ the first mention of barricades, and of something else: "As a detachment advanced, it was stopped by a new obstacle, a barricade formed across the street by one of those long coaches to which the Parisians have given the name of *omnibus*."

The people of Paris were, as has been said, on the watch. The countenance of every Minister was examined as he came

¹ Annuaire, 1827, p. 252.

³ Annual Register, 1830, p. 188.

² Annuaire, 1827, p. 261.

forth from royal audience, during the six weeks between the close of the elections and the resignation of Villèle; and during the whole of the next two years they remained on the watch, while a weak and incompetent Ministry was kept in, only by consent of all parties, because no party could put in a set of men of its own. During this period, minds and affairs were ripening for the great struggle to come; and everybody, unless it were the royal family, was aware that, though little appeared to be done, the time was not lost.

The chief signs of the times were, first, the introduction of an impeachment of Villèle, which was allowed to stand over from the session of 1828 to the next, in order to prevent his return to office; a proceeding of which he and his master could not complain, as the delay was reasonably accounted for by their frustration of all attempts to obtain the evidence required. Next, the continually growing proof of the impoverished condition of the people engaged in labor and trade; and, again, the introduction of more Liberals into office and the Chamber, — a sure token of change; and the more, because it was achieved by a coalition for a crisis between the Liberals and the Ultra-royalists.

Among those who were on the watch during all this time was Prince he by whom England was brought into relation with Polignac. this great French quarrel. Prince Jules de Polignac has been mentioned as the French ambassador in London, who was a party to the Treaty of London in regard to Greece. Prince Polignac was one of those men about whom neither the world at large, nor any one in it, knows how to be moderate, — the accomplished, narrow-minded, strong-minded, conscientious oppressor, whom the oppressed hate with extremity of hatred, and whom his associates respect and regard as a man of sincerity, conscience, and loyalty. The people of France lived in incessant mistrust of him, and dread lest he should not remain in London. The King of England and the Duke of Wellington entertained a cordial admiration and a strong personal friendship for him; and his own sovereign was attached to him as to a faithful and able adherent and champion. At the beginning of 1829, the Count de Ferronay, the French Foreign Minister, the most respected and trusted of the weak Ministry then existing, was compelled by illness to retire from office; and immediately Prince Polignac appeared in Paris. It was reported that he had been secretly sent for; that, if he could be got into office, he was gradually to restore the Villèle policy; and with one intolerable aggravation, — that he was to work out in France the pleasure of the Tory Ministry of England. The hated Wellington, who had brought back the Bourbons, and in this had helped to impose the tyranny under which the French nation groaned, was now about to impose a

friend and fellow-conspirator of his own upon France, and to rule the struggling nation with the rod of the Holy Alliance. If the French King and Ministry had hoped to bring in Prince Polignac, they found it would not do for this time. The ministers themselves threatened to resign, if the Prince came in as the nominee of the King. So Prince Polignac returned to London, after having made a speech of self-defence in the Chamber against the accusations of the newspapers. But he was not absent long. He was seen in Paris in July, a few days before the ominous close of the session of the Chambers; and, on the 8th of August, the publication of some royal ordinances made known to the world the formation of what will be for ever called the Polignac Ministry, though the Prince's office was at first only that of Foreign Minister. The transactions, from the time of his appointment to the stormy close of the year, were such as might well disturb the feeble and anxious mind of the King of England, sinking, as he was, daily deeper in disease, in his close retirement at Windsor. The caricatures of the day, whose authors were probably not aware how ill he was, represented him as going, under pretence of fishing, to weep at Virginia Water, which spread out, by means of that influx, to a lake of handsome size. He certainly never was more reasonable than in his apprehensions for Polignac and for France, — his ideas of the welfare of France being what they were.

It is not now easy to decide what were the principles on which the Polignac Ministry intended, in the first instance, to govern. When, in September, the people, indignant ^{Polignac Ministry.} at the government practice of tampering with their Chamber, and thus procuring revenue by means of taxes decreed by creatures of government, formed associations for purposes of resistance to illegal taxation, the Polignac Ministry made bitter complaints of misconstruction and unfair prejudgment.¹ "Judging by the newspapers," said the ministers, in the "*Moniteur*" of the 19th of September, "the government dreams only of *coups d'état*, and contemplates the overthrow of the charter. . . . Those who say such things know very well, that the ministers, unless they had lost all common sense, could not conceive the bare idea of violating the charter, and substituting a government by ordinances for that of the laws. Such men know also, that, if the ministers desired ever so much a method of government like this, the King would, on the first hint of such a system, thrust them out of power, — out of that power which he has confided to them, in his name and under their responsibility, to govern according to the laws." The only question, with regard to these protestations, is whether they were weak or wicked. If Prince

¹ *Annuaire*, 1829, p. 273.

Polignac really intended in September to govern only according to law, and to cherish the charter, the King and Prime Minister of England need not be ashamed of their friendship for him then; but they must have wholly cast him off from their respect and regard, when, in a few months, he had falsified all his professions. The French people believed nothing that he said. They expected from him exactly that which he did. The newspapers told their opinions and anticipations very plainly. While almost the whole journalist press of Paris reviled the Ministry from day to day, that of London praised it and exulted in it, with a fervor so strange and so unanimous, that it was no wonder that the friendship of the two administrations became a subject of suspicion to the sensitive and unhappy people of France, and that they gave the name of "the Wellington Ministry" to the Polignac Cabinet. One of the very few English journals which thought ill of the new French Ministry, from first to last, was the "Examiner;" and among its remarks at the time are these: "There seems to be this peculiarity about the new French Ministry, — that those who know least of it approve it most. The London journals, with a few exceptions, have been in raptures with it, while the French are hurling upon it a storm of the bitterest displeasure. . . . Why the Ministry should be found good in the eyes of the English Whigs and Radicals is more strange than that it should be overcharged with ill in the representations of the French *liberaux*. Our neighbors, indeed, style it a Tory Ministry; and, because the Duke of Wellington's original Tory Ministry has worked better than could have been expected for us, it is supposed that Tory ministers, all over the world, must have a similar operation. A Tory Ministry cured our state of bigotry, but it may happen to kill the liberality of France. We cannot, also, but give our neighbors credit for knowing more of their own affairs than we do; and the common sentiment of the intelligent on the other side of the water seems decidedly inimical to the new Administration."¹

The protestations of the Ministry were scarcely issued before their authors began to show what they were worth. They renewed their war against the press. M. Bertin, responsible editor of the "Journal des Débats," was prosecuted for the following words, which appeared in his paper on the accession of the new Ministry: "The bond of affection and confidence which united the monarch with the people is broken. Unhappy France! unhappy King!" On these words a charge was founded of offence against the King's person and authority, on the ground that any impeachment of the King's judgment in choosing his ministers was an attack on his authority; and any decla-

¹ England's Seven Administrations, i. p. 227.

ration, that there was no longer love between the King and his people, or between the people and their King, was an offence against his person. The courts of Paris were above trifling like this. After a deliberation of three hours as to the form of the judgment, the conclusion was, that M. Bertin was acquitted; because, "however improper might be the expressions of the article complained of, and however contrary to the moderation which should be preserved in discussing the acts of the government, they did not constitute actionable offences against the royal person or dignity."¹ Silence within the Court had been enjoined: but the acclamations with which the judgment was received were deafening; and they were caught up by the crowds outside, who soon, by their shouts, let all Paris know the result of the trial.

Meantime, the Cabinet was not strong in itself. Hitherto, the King or the Dauphin had presided at Council: but both became weary of the dissensions and weakness which they were compelled to witness; and Prince Polignac was made President of the Council. Upon this, the best, in their opinion,—the most Ultra-royalist of the ministers, Labourdonnaye,—withdrew. And now the consequences of a bad season had to be met, in addition to other difficulties. Wet and cold weather had materially injured all the crops in the country; the manufacturers' stocks were large, and a multitude of people, therefore, unemployed, when the winter set in early, and with great severity. What would Polignac, whose head was full of old feudal ideas, do for the modern farming and manufacturing France? What would he do—and this was the most anxious question to himself—with the Chambers? The Chamber of Deputies was hostile; but to resort to a new general election could only make matters worse. It is believed, that even now, on the eve of meeting the Chambers, he was undecided as to whether he would satisfy himself by merely putting down journalism,—not seeing that journalism was now an expression of the national will,—or whether he would supersede the electoral laws by royal ordinances, in order to obtain a Chamber which would work to his liking. Whatever might be in his mind, the fact of the case was, that the monarchy and the national liberties were now brought face to face for their decisive conflict, and that Prince Polignac was not aware of it.

Early in January, 1830, the King issued a notice to the Chambers to meet on the 2d of March. From this it was supposed that the representative part of the State was safe for the present. But there was evidently no improvement in the temper of the royal and governing

Summons to
the Cham-
bers.

¹ *Annuaire*, 1829, p. 281.

clique. When the President of the Court which had acquitted M. Bertin went, according to custom, to offer to the King and New-Year's royal family the usual wishes for the new year, he met Day. with a reception which showed, that, in France as in England, the first gentleman in the empire could lose his good-manners in personal pique.¹ The upright judge, M. Seguier, — who had asserted the function of his court in the memorable words, “The Court gives judgments, and not services,” — offered his congratulations to the King, with an expression of satisfaction in the privilege of a yearly audience to tender these wishes. The stern reply of the King was, “that he desired the magistrates of the Court never to forget the important duties they had to fulfil, and to render themselves worthy of the marks of confidence they had received from their King.” As for the royal ladies, the only word they had to give in reply to similar congratulations was, “Pass on;” and all the courtiers behaved to the judges exactly after the manner of the royal family. Childish as this appears in the reading, it was of vast importance at the time, as showing that the government could not tolerate the independent administration of justice, — the most fatal of all symptoms.

Throughout February the newspapers contained articles which hinted, or said plainly, that men were now driven to revive the old question, what France had gained by the return of the Bourbons, and whether she could prosper better under some other dynasty. Of course, the prosecutions of the journals were unremitting, and the sentences were often severe: but the more fines were imposed, the larger were the subscriptions to pay them; and the more men went to prison, the more volunteers appeared to carry on their work outside.

On the 2d of March, the King, surrounded by the royal family, met the Chambers. There was more than ordinary King's pomp and gravity observable in the proceedings. It speech. was remarked, and afterwards told, in every home in France, that, when the King set his foot on the step of the throne, he dropped his hat, which was picked up by the Duke of Orleans, and presented by him, kneeling on one knee. The speech was listened to with breathless eagerness; and, up to the last paragraph, it gave nothing but satisfaction. It told of peace abroad, of a good state of the finances, of fidelity to the charter; but the last paragraph ruined every thing. In it the King called upon the Peers to aid him in governing the country well; expressed his trust in them to repudiate wicked insinuations; and declared that if obstacles to his government should arise which he could not, and did not choose to foresee, he should find strength to

¹ Annuaire, 1830, p. 2.

overcome them in the loyalty of his people.¹ The surprise and dismay caused on the instant by these words were evident enough through all the usual loyal demonstrations of the occasion.

The Peers replied coldly to this direct appeal, assuring His Majesty that there was indeed nothing to fear from the obstacles of faction, as the government would have the support of both Chambers, and of the great majority of the nation; as the Crown and the charter—the rights of royalty and the liberties of the people—were inseparably connected, and must be transmitted undivided. This was pretty strong in the way of admonition and rebuke; but the Ministry dared not object, for fear of bringing upon themselves something worse, in the form of direct censure. The King, to whom the address was presented on the 9th of March, ventured to congratulate himself on the substance of his sentiments having been so perfectly apprehended.²

The tug of war was in the other Chamber, where, from the first day of the session, the ministers found themselves overpowered by the Liberals, who carried all the appointments of the Chamber. The attendance was very full during the days employed in the preparation of the address. Some paragraphs of this address declared, that the charter supposed, in order to its working, a concurrence between the mind of the sovereign and the interests of his people; that it was the painful duty of the deputies to declare that that concurrence existed no longer, the present Administration ordering all its acts on the supposition of the disaffection of the people,—a supposition which the nation had a right to complain of, as injurious to its character, and threatening to its liberties. It was not supposed that the King entertained this distrust. His heart was too noble to admit it. But he could not be further from desiring despotism than his people from desiring anarchy; and he was implored to have the same faith in the loyalty of the nation, as the nation had in the sincerity of his promises. Finally, His Majesty was appealed to, to choose between his faithful and confiding Parliament, and the parties who misapprehended the calm and enlightened mind of the people of France.³

There was doubt as to whether the King would receive this address, though it passed by a majority of 221 to 181. He received it, however, on the 18th of March, at noon. The attendance was more numerous than usual. The President of the Chamber read the address—the last the unhappy monarch was ever to receive from his Parliament—with a grave and firm voice, which, however, faltered towards the close. The

¹ Annuaire, 1830, p. 7.

² Annuaire, 1830, p. 12.

³ Annuaire, 1830, p. 19.

King listened with gravity; but, when he delivered the reply which had previously been agreed upon in council, strong emotion was evident in his voice, through the constrained calmness of his manner. His reply—for which the King of England was earnestly listening in his retreat at Windsor, and the British Ministry, because the peace of our country might depend upon it—was this: “Sir, I have heard the address which
King’s reply. you present to me in the name of the Chamber of Deputies. I was justified in relying on the concurrence of the two Chambers, in accomplishing all the good which I contemplated. I am grieved to find that the deputies declare, that, on their part, such concurrence exists no longer. Gentlemen, I announced my intentions in my speech at the opening of the session. These intentions are immutable. The interest of my people forbids my receding from them. My ministers will make my further purposes known to you.”¹

The next day, the Chambers were prorogued to the 1st of September. And where was the King on the next 1st of September? “Long live the King!” cried some on the ministerial side. “Long live the charter!” cried some on the opposite side. “Long live the constitution!” shouted a voice from one of the galleries, where the citizens of Paris had crowded in, to see what would happen. The Royalists set up the cry, “Down with faction!” and called upon the President to order the departure of strangers; but the President’s authority was at an end now that the session was closed, and the whole assemblage broke up in disorder. There were many heavy hearts in both Chambers, and in every street in Paris. It had not been supposed that the King would stand out to such a point as this. It was the first time that the sovereign had used the power of thus untimely dispersing his Parliament. The budget was not brought forward, nor any provision made for some extraordinary expenses of the time. Every one saw that a dissolution might next be expected, and that this was a rupture which could not be healed. The Liberals, who were virtually conquerors, were sure of their ground; but they were full of solicitude about what was to happen next. The Royalists were merry and confident, looking upon the present crisis as the emancipation of royalty from tutelage.

After a grand expedition had been sent off to Algiers, which, it was hoped, would divert the attention of the people from politics, and fix it upon military glory, the Chambers were dissolved on the 16th of May, new elections ordered for June and July, and the new Parliament directed to meet on the 3d of August. And where was the King on that 3d of August?

¹ Annuaire, 1830, p. 44.

In the elections, the government was beaten at all points. The nation was fond of military glory, as hitherto; and the multitudes enjoyed the spectacle, and the news of the ^{The} elections. imposing departure of the Algerine expedition. But the political crisis had gone too far to be lost sight of. Finding this, the Ministry not only employed their whole power and influence in endeavoring to carry the elections, but actually instigated the King himself to canvass for votes in a proclamation which was issued on the 14th of June, and which began with the words, "The elections are about to take place throughout the kingdom. Listen to the voice of your King!" The voice of the King proceeds to extol the charter and the national institutions; but declares, that, in order to make them available, the royal prerogative must remain unassailed.¹ The concluding words are interesting, as the last which this wretched sovereign addressed to his subjects. "Electors! hasten to the place of voting. Let not guilty negligence induce you to absent yourselves! Let one sentiment animate you,—one banner be your rallying-point! It is your King who requires this of you: it is a father who summons you. Do your duty, and I will do mine." Characteristic last words!

The government being beaten at all points, what was to be done next? Either the Ministry must resign, and open the way to a new course of policy, or they must choose one of two desperate methods of governing the country,—dispensing with a Parliament altogether; or setting aside the electoral laws, and ordaining new ones, in order to obtain an obedient Chamber of Deputies. The government newspapers put out feelers about these latter courses, or audaciously advocated them; but everybody supposed the Administration would not venture upon them, but would resign. Up to the 26th of July, however, there was no appearance of an intention to do any thing but simply meet the new Chambers. The letters of summons to the Peers had been transmitted, and the deputies were travelling towards Paris from all parts of the kingdom. They did not know—and the people along the roads, who were rejoicing in the capture of Algiers, little suspected—what was taking place between the Polignac Ministry and the King.

Up to the last moment, the proposed plan of the Ministry had been to bring forward in the Chambers a popular budget, in which many and great economical reforms would be recommended. Then, they were to excite to the utmost the patriotic pride of the members about the Algerine victories; and they hoped, that, through the blaze of those glories, they might carry, almost unobserved, the restrictive laws of the press, which they were

¹ Annuaire, 1830, p. 114.

resolved to obtain. Except their actual conduct, nothing could be more blind and foolish than this plan of procedure, nor more insulting to the French nation, who were thus to be treated like children,—bribed to suffer restraint by the exhibition of a glittering toy. Their actual conduct was, however, even worse. Finding it out of the question to meet the Chambers, they still did not think of resigning, but addressed a memorial to the King, ^{Ministers' memorial.} petitioning and recommending him to set aside the charter. They had their own sense of duty; and, mistaken, utterly foolish, as it was, they resolved to abide by it. They believed that the monarchical principle was now to be surrendered, or snatched from destruction by a bold hand. They despised the cowardly suggestion of retiring from the contest, and, as they viewed the matter, deserting the King; so they remained beside him, and urged him on to destruction. In ruining their King, and outraging his people, they never felt the smallest doubt that they were discharging a sublime duty. Whatever the King of England might think of this, the British Premier had shown that his sympathy could not go this length. His measures of the preceding year were a practical and most powerful protest against the policy which was unjustly supposed to be instigated, or at least countenanced, by him, because a personal friend of his was responsible for it. Prince Polignac was known to be inaccessible to counsel. It is probable, that, if he had ever obtained any opinion at all from the Duke of Wellington, or had guided himself by the policy of England in her last great crisis, he would not have been the one to overthrow the monarchy of France.

The ministers had discussed, in some of their meetings, a plan of three ordinances, which, being issued by the King, might free the government at once from its two great difficulties,—the press and the Chambers. These ordinances were laid before the King in Council, on the 21st of July, together with a memorial which explained their object and their necessity.¹ This memorial declared that there was no provision in the charter for the protection of the periodical press, which had at all times been, from its very nature, nothing but an instrument of disorder and sedition; that it had established a despotism in the Chamber of Deputies, where every man who adhered to the side of order was sure to be insulted by the newspapers; that the Algerine expedition had been endangered by the disclosures and criticisms of the press; that the King's own words and sentiments had been disrespectfully discussed in the journals; that it was for His Majesty to say whether such conduct should go unpunished; that government and the press could not co-exist; and that the prolonged cry of

¹ *Annuaire*, 1830, p. 118.

indignation and terror from all parts of the kingdom against the journals of Paris showed which must give way. So much for the press. As for the other difficulty, the representation, the ministers suggested that the right of government to provide for its own security existed before any laws, and, being founded in the nature of things, must overbear all laws; that the time had arrived for the assertion of this primary right; that all legal resources had been exhausted in vain; and that, if the ordinances proposed were not in accordance with the letter of the laws, they were with the spirit of the charter; and that the Administration did not hesitate to recommend to the King the issuing of the accompanying ordinances, convinced as they were that justice must always prevail. Such was the memorial which was published with the celebrated ordinances of Charles X. and his Polignac Ministry.

These ordinances were three.¹ By the first, the liberty of the periodical press was suspended: no journals were to be issued but by the express authorization of government, which must be renewed every three months, and might be withdrawn at any time; and all writings of less than twenty pages of print were to lie under the same conditions. By the second ordinance, the Chamber of Deputies was dissolved, on the ground that means had been used, in various parts of the kingdom, to deceive and mislead the electors, during the late elections. By the third ordinance, means were taken to correct such abuses by setting aside those provisions of the charter which were found inconvenient in their operation; by the power conferred on the King by the charter to consult the security of the State, he lessened the number of deputies, reduced their term of office, and altered their qualification, and the methods of election.

It is scarcely credible, even now, that any government of our day should have conceived of doing such things as these by the mere will of the sovereign; and the question arises, how the government could have gone on thus far, administered by men who now showed themselves destitute of all idea of nationality, law, and the purposes of social organization. These three ordinances, together with some subordinate articles, recalling to the Council some men odious to the people, were countersigned by the six ministers present in Council, and kept profoundly secret till half an hour before midnight of the 25th of July, when they were communicated to the responsible editor of the "*Moniteur*" newspaper, for publication in the morning. So profoundly had the secret been kept, that neither the heads of the police nor the soldiery had the least idea that any extraordinary call was likely to be made upon their energies. The ministers had not made the slightest preparation for any awkward reception of their meas-

¹ Issue of the Ordinances, *Annuaire*, 1830, p. 120.

ures. There is no evidence, that, amidst all their complaints of popular disobedience and violence, they dreamed of resistance to the ordinances. As for the public, though something of the sort had been predicted and vaguely expected, from the day of Polignac's accession to office, the amazement and dismay at last were as overwhelming as if no forebodings had been entertained.

The opposition journalists were the first to act on that memorable 26th of July.¹ They obtained an opinion from the most eminent lawyers in Paris of the illegality of the ordinances; and then assembled, to the number of forty-four, in the office of the "National," to prepare the celebrated protest which Protest of the journalists. first gave direction to the bewildered mind of Paris. By this protest, they proved the illegality of the ordinances, declared their own intention of resisting them, and invited the deputies to meet on the properly appointed day,—the 3d of August. "The government," said the protest, "has to-day forfeited that character of legality which makes obedience a duty. We, for our part, shall resist it. It is for the rest of the nation to determine how far its own resistance shall extend." A legal sanction was given, in the course of the day, to such a method of proceeding as this, by the decision of the magistrate, M. Belleyme, who authorized the printer of the "Journal of Commerce" to continue the issue of that paper provisionally, as long as the ordinance of the 25th had not been promulgated according to the legal forms.

At the Exchange, the excitement was tremendous. Crowds assembled in all the avenues to it, long before the gates were opened; and then the hubbub was such as might have alarmed even Prince Polignac, if he had witnessed it; but his way was to see very little, and to believe nothing but what he saw. Every one wanted to sell, and nobody to buy: manufacturers declared that they should close their establishments, and dismiss their workmen; and the Exchange had not been seen in so stormy a state since the return of the Bourbons. Presently, the stir and excitement had spread to the remotest corners of Paris; and in the theatres the usual occasions were found or made for expressing the popular opinion. The day passed over, however, without actual insurrection; and the ministers agreed, that the discontent would exhaust itself in harmless murmurs; that no struggle need be apprehended till the new elections should be entered upon; and that they need not send police or soldiery into the streets, to disperse the groups which began to form there. Even the usual leave of absence, asked by some military officers, was granted as on ordinary days. Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, who commanded the troops, held a most difficult position. He had no

¹ *Annuaire*, 1830, p. 124.

warning whatever of what was going to be done; though the Ministry were as well aware as he was, that whole divisions of the soldiery were so full of popular sympathy as to be unreliable, in case of insurrection. As the event showed, there were only 6000 on whom he could depend; and of these nearly 2000 were needed for the supply of the regular posts in Paris, and about the King's palace at St. Cloud: so that the general had but little more than 4000 men wherewith to defend Paris, and put down revolt, if the citizens should be disposed to resist the overthrow of the charter.

The most remarkable scene, on Tuesday, the 27th, was the conflict between the police and the newspaper corps. ^{Destruction of the press.} The doors of the offices were closed, and the papers were thrown out of the windows as fast as they could be printed; and the eager mob handed them, by tens of thousands, to every house, or to every reader who wished to see the famous protest. The police, meantime, were standing before the doors, unable to effect an entrance, because nobody would give any aid. One blacksmith after another was brought to the spot with his tools; but one after another folded his arms, and refused to force the locks. When half Paris had witnessed the scene, so damaging to the authority of the government, the doors were at last broken in, the manuscripts and books seized, the types thrown away, and the presses broken; a process which did not make the temper of the government more respected than its power had been. During this day, the Tribunal of Commerce declared itself. The printer of the "*Courrier Français*" had been afraid to print the paper in violation of the ordinance, and the editors sued him for breach of contract. The tribunal, by the voice of its president, Ganneron,—a voice which sounded firm and clear amidst the first roar of the revolutionary storm,—pronounced that the ordinance, being contrary to the charter, could not be binding to any one, from His Majesty the King to the remotest of his subjects; and that the printer must act, in fulfilment of his contract, within twenty-four hours.

Before two o'clock, Marmont was posting his troops, and bodies of men were arming themselves from the gunsmiths' ^{Thirty deputies.} shops. Some thirty deputies had met to consider whether or not they should assemble on the 3d of August; and the police and soldiery drew round their place of meeting. They do not appear to have thought of any thing but legal resistance as yet; but, in the midst of their consultation, a deputation came to them from the electors of Paris, to say, that, by the promulgation of the ordinances, law was at an end, and that insurrection was the method open to the citizens, and that which they were prepared to adopt. The deputation declared that assemblages

were beginning in the streets; that they, the representatives of a multitude like-minded with themselves, had cast themselves, "body and goods," into the enterprise; and that they now called upon the deputies to sanction and guide their proceedings. Next came a body of young men, messengers from a large association resolved on an immediate struggle, who offered a guard to the assembled deputies. These last could come to no immediate determination under these exciting visitations, with police and soldiers all about the neighborhood, and shots multiplying in the streets, and at the very door. They appointed a place of meeting for the morrow, when some of them were to come prepared with a decisive protest, which should be immediately considered, and issued when agreed upon. The ministers met this afternoon at the Foreign Office; and though they knew every thing that was going forward, saw with their own eyes the state of the streets and the armorers' shops, and had — Prince Polignac and M. de Montbel — been pelted with showers of stones, they could not yet perceive the seriousness of the occasion. They expected the people to become quiet, and talked of declaring Paris in a state of siege, as a threatening measure, and of bringing in troops from a distance, if matters were not right to-morrow morning. They had great faith in the power of soldiery against a mob; and thought little of the all-important circumstance, that various bodies of the troops had shown disinclination to act against the citizens.

On Wednesday morning, the 28th, barricades were seen rising in all directions; paving-stones, powder, and lead, were carried into houses favorably placed for attacking troops in the streets; the court tradesmen, seeing that they were in danger of insult from their display of the royal arms, took them down; and this became the signal for pulling down the royal insignia everywhere, and dragging them through the mud. The arsenal, the artillery depot, and the powder-mills, were all emptied with extraordinary despatch; and every soldier or government servant who carried arms was disarmed, as soon as met. The Prefect of the Seine went, at seven in the morning, to inform the Minister, that, if the Hotel de Ville were not properly guarded, he feared it would be entered, and a Provisional Council of the people be established therein; but the Minister still did not consider the matter serious, thought the people would be scared back to their homes when Paris should be declared in a state of siege, and drove off to attend a council at St. Cloud, where the King and royal family now were. When the magistrate returned from this interview, the Hotel de Ville was in the hands of the people, who had turned out the guard of sixteen men, and were running up to the belfry, where they rang the tocsin, and hung

out the tricolored flag, with crape for mourning; and the eloquent flag streamed to the wind, in the sight of all Paris. Presently there was another streaming from the steeple of Notre Dame, whose great bell was kept tolling, to call the people to arms. Soon after this was accomplished, bodies of soldiery appeared, to guard the edifices which were already in the possession of the citizens. In the course of the morning, there were various encampments of troops in different parts of the city: but no one seems to have remembered that they would want food; for none was provided. Marshal Marmont now sent a letter and report to St. Cloud, to alarm the King, and assure him that it was necessary to yield immediately; that, if measures of pacification were instantly offered, there might yet be time to save the royal dignity; but that to-morrow it would be too late. This letter is declared to have been missent or suppressed.

When the ministers returned from St. Cloud, they assembled and remained at the Tuileries, believing that they should no longer be safe in their own houses, and that they ought to be on the spot, ready to hold council with Marshal Marmont, who was now — Paris being in a state of siege — the head of the government. Almost as soon as they had arrived, a remarkable deputation was shown into the presence of Marshal Marmont. Five deputies came, sent by the liberal members of their body, to propose a truce, for the saving of life, till communication could be had with the King. The Marshal appeared disposed for peace, on his own part; but declared that his orders were positive, to enforce the decrees of the government. He offered to send a message to St. Cloud; and did so. He inquired if the deputies had any objection to see Prince Polignac: they expressed themselves willing, and he went into an adjoining room. Returning almost immediately, he intimated that, as nothing could be done till an answer arrived from St. Cloud, there would be no use in their seeing Prince Polignac. It was afterwards made known, that orders had been issued for the arrest of five or six of the leading liberal deputies, some of whom were of this negotiating party; that the intended victims passed through the presence of the officers charged to arrest them; and that, on their departure, Marshal Marmont countermanded the orders, which could not now be executed without too much hazard.

The Marshal sent one of his aides-de-camp, Colonel Komierowski, to St. Cloud with a letter which related the ^{Message to the} mission of the deputies, and referred the ^{King.} the bearer for an account of what was passing in Paris. It was four o'clock when the messenger left Paris. When he arrived at St. Cloud, the King was at cards; and some of the ladies were in the orangery, silently listening to the distant firing. They had

all been informed by an officer of the royal suite of what was going on; but the King comforted himself with the thought, that everybody always exaggerates dangers. The messenger did his duty well. He delivered the letter into the King's own hand, observing that an answer could not be given too speedily; that it was not the populace, but the whole people, that had risen. "It is a formidable revolt, is it?" inquired the King. "Sire," replied the soldier, "it is not a revolt; it is a revolution." The King desired him to retire, and return to his presence to receive his answer, when the letter should have been read; and, at the end of twenty minutes of anxious waiting, he was called in. The Dauphin and the Duchess de Berri were present; and it was unchecked by them that the King gave the message which

The King's message. he chose to send to Marshal Marmont, — a message so cold and cruel, as well as foolish, as to extinguish any lingering feelings of compassion for his loss of the sovereignty of France. His verbal message was, that Marshal Marmont must hold on, — "concentrate his forces, and act with the masses;" that is, he was to put down the people by military force, at all events. It also signified the King's displeasure at the dispersion of the forces over Paris. The method prescribed was already impossible. The greater number of the soldiers had gone over to the people: those that remained were too few for the work, and they were hungry, weary, and distressed. At night, orders were sent, in the quietest way possible, to such of them as were at the Hotel de Ville, where fighting had been going on, without result, for many hours, to return to the Tuileries in the best way they could. Since the morning of the preceding day, there had been no issue of provisions to the soldiers; and now, when in a famished condition they reached the Tuileries at midnight, after fighting all day in a burning sun, there was neither food nor drink for them. They were promised some at daybreak; but it was not to be got.¹ The officers bought up from the bakers whatever bread they had; but it went a very little way. It was no wonder that it was found next morning that a large proportion of the troops of the line were not to be depended on.

There was little rest for anybody that night. The soldiers were murmuring; and their commander was in great anguish of mind, which caused a miserable irresolution in his purposes. He disapproved the ordinances as much as any man in Paris, and had said so to M. Arago, the Monday before; but his professional duty constrained him — or he thought it did — to fire upon the citizens, who had his sympathies in their enterprise. He was required to fulfil his professional duty under every kind of disadvantage. His troops were

¹ *Annuaire*, 1830, p. 155.

too few, and many of them untrustworthy; food and ammunition fell short; he lay under the displeasure of the King, and was not on good terms with the ministers. Marshal Marmont was a wretched man that night. All night the tocsin rang, banishing sleep from the city. All night the people were cutting down the trees of the Boulevards, and building up new barricades. On the 29th, however, these were no longer wanted. The soldiers no longer came out against the people. They were posted "in masses," as the King desired; and the people must come up, and attack them.

There was a good deal of fighting in a desultory kind of way; but regiment after regiment unscrewed their bayonets, and joined the people, or at least withdrew from the struggle. Meantime, from early in the morning, a remarkable scene was going forward in the Palace of the Tuileries.

The Peers had made no demonstration as a Chamber; but some of them had fought as private men on the side of the people. Early in the morning of the 29th, the Marquis de Semonville, who held a high office in the Chamber of Peers, went to the Tuileries, saw Marmont, who carried despair in his countenance, and requested from him an interview with Prince Polignac. The marquis was accompanied by M. d'Ar-gout; and their account of the interview has never been disputed. The marquis peremptorily requested Prince Polignac to withdraw the ordinances, in order to stop the effusion of blood, and preserve Paris; or, at least, to resign. Prince Polignac replied, with cold politeness, that he had no power of his own to take either step, without consultation with the King. The other ministers said the same thing; but their whole manner conveyed to the two peers the impression, that they were "under the influence of a power greater than their own will;" that, as they had tempted and urged on the King to this pass, he would not now let them draw back.¹ At length, Prince Polignac, with the same calm politeness, yielded so far as to propose to retire, to deliberate with his colleagues. While he was out of the room, the marquis urged Marmont to arrest the ministers, as the shortest way of putting an end to the slaughter in the streets; the Governor of the Tuileries offering to do the deed, and the marquis himself proposing to go to St. Cloud, to work upon the King. Marmont was convulsed with agitation; he shed tears of indignation and passion, in the conflict between the convictions of his judgment and his professional duty: but he had yielded, and was about to sign the requisite orders, when Peyronnet came in, and said in a voice of great emotion, as he stood behind the marquis, "What! not gone yet?" The intention to yield was clear from

¹ *Annuaire*, 1830, p. 159.

the tone and manner of these few words. The marshal wrote something different from what he had intended; he wrote a pressing entreaty to the King to give way. The Governor put the two Peers instantly into a carriage for St. Cloud; Prince Polignac and some of his colleagues entered another, and the two carriages reached St. Cloud at the same time. Their arrival, and the disorder and agitation of their appearance, created no little astonishment there; for even yet the royal family insisted upon it, that all their informants exaggerated the confusion. The King taunted the marquis with this, in the interview which ensued.

During that interview, the King was as obstinate as ever about the ordinances, and his "system" of government. It was only by presenting plainly to him his personal danger from the hands of the populace, and his responsibility for the lives and fortunes of his family, that the marquis could make any impression upon him whatever. It was not a moment for scruples; and the marquis therefore laid upon the King the sole responsibility for any thing that might happen to his family through his refusal to yield. This at length brought tears to the old man's eyes: he dropped his head upon his breast, and said, in a low and agitated voice, "I will request my son to write, and assemble the Council."

After a short deliberation, it was resolved that the ordinances should be revoked, and a new Ministry appointed: but, either from some difficulty about the new appointments, or from some lingering hope of better news, the decision was kept secret till the evening; and then it was too late.

The ministers fairly gone, Marmont ordered the soldiers to act only on the defensive, and proclaimed a truce at various points; but he was not much attended to, and, in fact, not understood. In some places, the conflict raged more than ever; and, elsewhere, more and more soldiers went over to the people. In the afternoon, the citizens had penetrated everywhere; and Marmont found himself suddenly compelled to leave the city, if he wished to preserve his force at all. He could not even give notice of his intention to several scattered companies, which he was obliged to leave to their fate. Most of them, however, made their way out, and joined him on the road to St. Cloud.

His only hope now was to guard the person of the King, and the safety of the royal family. On the road, the soldiers met the Dauphin, with two aides-de-camp. They formed in battalions to receive him. They supposed that he would address the troops, and invite them to follow him to Paris; but he only rode rapidly, and in dismal silence, along their front, and turned back towards St. Cloud, whither they followed him with heavy

Concession
from the
King.

Retreat to St.
Cloud.

hearts. Their case was a hard one. Their good-will towards the people and their cause was such, that they spared life to the utmost that was consistent with their military duty, while they were pelted with stones, and treated as enemies by the populace: and, at the same time, they had no encouragement on the side of their professional duty; their wants were not cared for; they were not supported by an efficient command; nor were their spirits cheered by a single demonstration in favor of the royal cause. Throughout the whole struggle, not one solitary cry of "Long live the King!" was heard. And now, when all was over, and they were going to the presence of the King, the King's heir had not one word of thanks or sympathy to address to them; but, on the contrary, he seemed to doubt whether they had done their duty. Some of them must have wished themselves with those of their comrades who had fallen, — with the old grenadier, one of the heroes of Austerlitz, who fell mortally wounded this day by a ball from the musket of a citizen, exclaiming, "I was a good Frenchman, however."

The troops, on their arrival at St. Cloud, were encamped in the avenues of the park; but still, no provision of food or comfort was made for them. Those who had their pay in their pockets bought of the bakers; the others were at last fed by requisitions on the nearest inhabitants. In the evening, Marmont delivered a sort of proclamation, in which he declared the revocation of the ordinances, and the change of Ministry. The soldiers cried, "Long live the King!" and set about eating, and reposing themselves. The Dauphin was indignant with the marshal, — called him traitor, ordered his arrest, ^{Marmont's reception.} and took his sword from him with his own hand;¹ but the King checked these proceedings, made some kind of apology for them, and ordered the troops to be informed that he was satisfied with their conduct.

The courtiers were the most at a loss what to do. It was long before they could admit the idea of the popular victory; but, when they did, they took their part with a primary view to their own security. Up to the night of the 29th, all had been brilliant, gay, and confident. Next day, there was an eager looking-out for news; but when, all day long, nobody entered the park, no deputations, no messengers, no news-bearers, the silence of consternation settled down on the Palace of St. Cloud. Then, one by one, the carriages rolled away; attendance slackened; manners became cold and careless; and, in a few hours, the great house appeared nearly empty. Only a few general officers and gentlemen-in-waiting remained, — except, indeed, the disgraced ministers. The King could not bear this, and he did not know whether

¹ Annuaire, 1830, p. 135.

he was safe at St. Cloud ; so, at three in the morning of the last day of July, he set off for Trianon, another country palace, with his whole family and establishment, except the Dauphin and his attendants, who remained with the troops. The soldiers were naturally discouraged at this ; and some returned to Paris without asking leave.

The unhappy King could not rest. He went from place to place, seeing the hated tricolor everywhere along the road, and forsaken by more and more of his guard of soldiers, who could not endure being thus dragged about before the eyes of the victorious people. His displaced ministers dropped off, except Polignac, who remained some days in the suite of his sovereign, but concealing himself from observation. That night — the night of the 1st of August — the King believed that all was lost for himself, for he heard that the Duke of Orleans had accepted the office of Lieutenant-general of the kingdom ; but there might be a hope that the crown might be preserved for his grandson, the posthumous child of the Duke de Berri : and, in his favor, the King that night abdicated ; and the Dauphin resigned his pretensions to the throne. Again they had to learn that it was too late. The only notice taken was by sending commissioners from Paris to advise the departure of the whole royal family for Cherbourg, whence they were to leave the kingdom ; and to require the delivery of the crown jewels. It was impossible to resist. The jewels were delivered up ; the last orders to the troops were issued while the Chambers met in Paris, according to the King's first appointment, and in defiance of his subsequent decree of dissolution. The last orders to the troops were to repair to Paris, after having seen the royal family depart ; and to submit themselves to whatever authority they might find supreme in the capital. On the morning of the 4th, the poor King affected to give the order for departure, though the commissioners remained to accompany him to the coast, and were, in fact, the masters. As he passed between the ranks of his soldiers, and among the flags under which they were to fight no more, tears were in his eyes and in theirs ; and these tears seem to have been the only mark of regret that he met with during the whole process of his dethronement. The royal party moved as slowly as possible towards the coast. They lingered : they courted sympathy : they looked in every face they met for comfort ; but there was no comfort for them, for they had not deserved it. They had done nothing to secure either the respect or affection of the nation ; and they now met with nothing but indifference or mere compassion. No one injured them ; no one insulted them ; no one withheld the observances of ordinary civility : but it was impossible for them not to see that no one cared for them. For

the children, indeed, some emotion was shown; banished as they were from their birthright, before they were old enough to know what they had lost.

When the train arrived on the heights above Cherbourg, the spectacle that met the eyes of the travellers was very ^{Departure} affecting. The vessels in the harbor carried the tri- ^{from France.} color, all but two,—two ships in the distance, whose sails were hung out, and all evidently ready for immediate departure. These were American vessels engaged to carry the royal family into exile. The travelling-party drove through the town without stopping, and immediately went on board the “Great Britain,” the soldiers on the quay presenting arms, and their officers saluting in grave silence, as the exiles passed. Captain Dumont d’Urville—who afterwards perished by fire in the dreadful railway accident near Versailles—waited on the King, to inquire whither he should have the honor of escorting him. “To Spithead,” was the reply.

The pilot who took them out of port related, on his return, that, as the unhappy family saw the shores of France grow dim and dimmer in the distance, their sobs and lamentations became more and more irrepressible. The King alone preserved his calmness. In twenty-four hours from their sailing,—that is, before three o’clock in the afternoon of the 17th of August,—the vessels anchored at Spithead. Two of the King’s suite were put on shore, in order to proceed to London, to learn the pleasure of the King and Ministry of England. As it was reported to the exiles that the people of Portsmouth, in their joy at the emancipation of France, meant to hang out the tricolor all over the harbor, the vessels were removed from their first station, and moored off Cowes, in the Isle of Wight.

The English ministers had to consult the foreign ambassadors; and it was two days before their answer arrived. The ^{Reception in} decision was, that Charles X. should be received, but ^{England.} as a private individual; under which character he thenceforth bore the title of the Count de Ponthieu. From this time till October, the exiles lived at Lulworth, in Dorsetshire; but there were reasons—some assigned, and more supposed—why they should be recommended to reside further from the coast, and in a place less immediately accessible from France. William IV. offered for their use the palace of Holyrood, where the ex-King had resided during his former exile. There the family lived in retirement, occupied with the education and prospects of the young King, Henry V., as they called him. The dethroned sovereign had nothing to suffer from remorse, or even misgiving. He never ceased to believe and say, that the ordinances were necessary; that the Revolution would have happened exactly as

it did, if he had never issued them ; and that the French nation had misrepresented his intentions.

What the French nation did next, we shall see hereafter. The conduct of the people during the three days was singularly noble. No deed of meanness, and scarcely one of violence, is reported, at a time when public opinion was the only law. The historical education of the French people may not have fitted them for the full understanding and enjoyment of combined liberty and order ; but of the strength at once of their patriotism and self-command, in an hour of crisis, no doubt remained in any mind in Europe, after the spectacle of the three days.

As for the late ministers, they were tried by special commission. Prince Polignac was arrested on the night of the 16th of August, when he was on the point of escaping to Jersey. He preserved his calmness throughout, sending in to the government a letter of extraordinary confidence, in which he demanded his freedom, and permission to retire with his family to the tranquillity of the domestic hearth, at home or abroad. If, however, his detention should be decided upon, he requested that his place of imprisonment might be the fortress of Ham, where he had undergone a long captivity in his youth. His life and the lives of his colleagues were spared. They were sentenced to imprisonment for life, — Polignac and Peyronnet at Ham, — to confiscation of all their goods, and outlawry ; to a condition, in short, of civil death.

The loss of life during the three days was much less than could have been expected, and than was believed at the time by those engaged. On the side of the troops, the loss is estimated at about 250 killed, and 500 wounded. On the popular side, the numbers are more certainly known. The killed were 788, and the wounded 4500.¹

While the state of France, viewed in connection with politics at home, was disturbing the mind of the sick King of England, he had to bear a series of vexations on a personal matter, in which he was really ill-used. Among the killed at Waterloo was the Duke of Brunswick, whose young heir was left to the guardianship of the King of Hanover. The boy turned out ill ; and there was no end to the trouble he gave to his guardian. He concluded by publishing libels against George IV., which positively asserted charges too serious to be allowed to pass ; as, for instance, that he, the Duke, had been excluded from his rights for long after he came of age. Though the incessant brawls and disgraces of the young man showed the world that he was not worth attending to, it was necessary to put

¹ *Annuaire*, 1830, p. 166.

some check upon him; and his refusal to recognize certain political acts of his guardian — liberal changes which were valued by his subjects — rendered some interposition necessary. He must also be rebuked for having sent a challenge to the Hanoverian Minister, Count Munster. The courts of Vienna and Berlin tried to bring the young man to reason and penitence, to avoid the serious disgrace of a virtual trial before the Diet; but he would not yield. An appeal was therefore made to the Diet, by both the subjects and the guardian of the Duke. The affair was gone into, and judgment given against the Duke on every point.¹ He was enjoined to fulfil the pledges given to his subjects, and to make apology and reparation to his guardian. But he paid no attention to the judgment; made no apology; withdrew no libels; made no advances towards his subjects. Such was the state of things in 1829. During the revolutions of the next year, occasion was taken to settle his affairs. He was deposed, by universal consent, and his younger brother put in his place. Of course he complained loudly and long; but his unfitness for power was so evident that no one aided him, and everybody advised him to be quiet. The judgment of the Diet relieved George IV. from all apprehension for his reputation as the Duke's guardian; but the affair was one of the annoyances which imbittered the close of his life, and which he had no longer strength of body or mind to bear cheerfully.

The Pope, Leo XII., died in February of this year, 1829. His reign had been short, — only five years and a half; and ^{Death of the Pope.} it had not been distinguished by any remarkable events, or indications of character or ability in himself. His tendencies were despotic; but he had not force of mind to withstand the liberalizing influences of the time; so he indulged his predilections merely by increasing the number and aggrandizing the condition of his clergy. The King of the Netherlands forbade him to meddle in the management of the Catholic ecclesiastical seminaries of that kingdom; and he yielded. The French nation vexed him sadly by retrenching the power of the Jesuits in France; but he yielded. And now, at the age of sixty-nine, he laid down his predilections and his vexations together in the grave. His successor had as much reason as himself to feel how times were changed for popes. The new Pope, Cardinal Castiglione, took the title of Pius VIII.² One of his first acts was excommunicating the town of Imola, which lay under his displeasure. But neither ^{Accession of Pius VIII.} the inhabitants of Imola, nor anybody else, seemed to be at all aware of the infliction; and the affairs of that town and of the world went on as before. Times were indeed changed for popes; but it seems as if popes were not changed. Pius VIII.

¹ Annual Register, 1829, p. 202.

² Annual Register, 1829, p. 199.

excepted from the amnesty, usually published on the accession of a Pope, all political offenders ; declaring such to be of the nature of assassins, undeserving of the mercy of even the compassionate Church. Thus the new Pontiff did not enter upon his reign altogether in the spirit of the gospel, of which he professed to be the high-priest.

The war between Russia and Turkey was soon over. The Russian army swept all before it ; and when it had come like a hurricane down the Danube, and was seen descending the southern slopes of the Balkan, there was nothing more to be done but to obtain the best terms for the Porte that the conqueror would grant. On the 20th of August, the Russian general Diebitsch took Adrianople, the second city of the empire, without firing a shot ; so utterly confounded were the 80,000 inhabitants by the speed of his approach. On the Black Sea the Russians were unopposed ; and every post yielded to them. It now only remained to take Constantinople. Up to this time the Porte had refused all negotiation and offers of mediation. It was a religious war ; and, if the Christians were permitted to mediate, all the infidel subjects of the Porte would rise in rebellion, and the true faith would succumb. This was the answer given to, or allowed to be inferred by, the ambassadors of France, England, and Prussia, who had returned to Constantinople in June. But when the Russians were in full march on the capital, and the sacred flag itself did not raise enough of the faithful to daunt the foe, the gallant rulers of Turkey yielded to necessity, and sent two plenipotentiaries to Adrianople, to treat with the Russian general. The terms granted appeared at first sight very liberal ; but Russia obtained what she most desired, — money in abundance, and a protracted hold upon the country. Besides the indemnity to Russian merchants, amounting to about 800,000*l.*, Turkey was to pay the expenses of the war, in ten yearly instalments of half a million sterling each. During these ten years, the Turks were not to be rid of the Russian presence. On the payment of the first instalment, the Russians were to evacuate Adrianople ; on the second, to retire beyond the Balkan ; on the third, to quit the Danube ; and so on : but they were not to evacuate the Turkish dominions till the payments were all made, and the ten years expired. As for the question of territory, Russia left to the Porte more than might have been expected, retaining some portions here and there which would be useful auxiliaries to future conquests. It was a galling thing, however, that the whole of the left bank of the Danube was gone, and that no Mahommedan might possess a foot of land, or even reside there ; and, yet more, that the methods of administration set up by the Russians in the provinces were to remain ; and, worse still, that

no Russian in any part of the Turkish dominions was to be subject to any government but his own.¹ Henceforth the Russians might come and go, and conduct themselves as they pleased, with or without the connivance of the authorities at home; and they could be controlled only by means of their own ambassador and consuls, whose predilections would naturally be on the side of their countrymen. The truth was, all was now over with Turkey; and her political existence was henceforth nothing but a mere show, granted to the solicitations of the three Powers which deprecated her open destruction.

Of course, Turkey was in no condition to refuse any terms which might be proposed to her in regard to Greece. ^{Settlement of} The Turks in Greece, not being reinforced, had yielded ^{Greece.} almost everywhere to the arms of the Greeks and their allies; and the three Powers might now fix the boundaries of Greece, and arrange its affairs as they would. This had been begun in a protocol prepared by the three Powers in March; but the President of Greece, Capo d'Istria, objected to it. The National Assembly, which he convoked at Argos on the 23d of July, was composed mainly of his partisans; and they occupied their time till the 18th of August, chiefly in uttering sentiments on peace, and in compliments to the President. By that date, however, the three Powers were transacting the business of Greece more effectually at Constantinople, where Russia forced upon the Turkish government the acceptance of the protocol of March. To prevent Russia having too much influence, however, in the disposal of Greek affairs, the conferences on the subject were, by agreement of the three Powers, now to be carried on in London, where, from this time, neither the Turkish government nor the President of Greece had any part in the deliberations. The three Powers, seeing the helplessness of the other parties concerned, took the matter into their own hands, somewhat unceremoniously; offering some compensation to Turkey, by proposing a narrower boundary for Greece than that assigned in the March protocol.

It was presently determined, that Greece should be wholly released from Turkish rule; and that the Powers which had thus created a new State should appoint its form of government. The monarchical form having been chosen, as of course, the next question was who should be its king. In order to avoid jealousies, all Princes connected with the courts of the three Powers were excluded. The first to whom the new crown was offered was Prince John of Saxony. He declined it.² Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the widower of our Princess Charlotte, and at this day King of the Belgians, was supposed at the time to be eager for

¹ Annual Register, 1829, pp. 221-222. ² Annual Register, 1830, p. 300.

the sovereignty of Greece; and to him it was offered, in January, 1830, by the representatives of England, Russia, and France.

The negotiators were rather surprised by the Prince's method of proceeding. He had no idea of an unconditional acceptance or rejection; and, believing the possession of Candia to be essential to the security of the sovereignty of Greece, he asked for Candia. There were other stipulations too; and the offerers of the crown found themselves still involved in negotiations, when they had believed that they had only to confer a dignity. There was good-will on both sides, however; and by the month of April it was understood by all parties, that Prince Leopold had accepted the crown of Greece. The Prince himself, however, did not consider his acceptance to be beyond recall; for, on the 21st of May, he finally and conclusively declined the crown of Greece.

Various reasons for this conclusion have been assigned. One which is most generally agreed upon is, that the President of Greece had frightened him from his enterprise.¹ Prince Leopold had written to Capo d'Istria on the 28th of February, to announce his prospects and intentions, and to address his future subjects through their present ruler. The reply of the President, and the report of the proceedings of the Senate at Napoli, which reached the Prince in May, and have been made public, certainly leave no ground of surprise, that any rational man should decline a task so hopeless as that of governing Greece, while her internal state and foreign dangers were what they were thus shown to be. For the Prince's reasons for drawing back, there is no need to look beyond the fact, that the Senate refused to accept the arrangements of the three Powers, in regard to so important a matter as the boundaries of the State. But other causes might easily be, and were, alleged. By that month of May, it had become clear that George IV. was dying; and Prince Leopold, the uncle of the young Princess, who was to succeed the next aged and feeble heir to the throne, might, as brother to the Regent Duchess of Kent, be a personage of great political consequence, in case of the Princess coming to the throne before she was of age. Again, there is no need to go so far as this for the Prince's reasons. There was perhaps scarcely a child in England, who, hearing any thing of the matter at all, did not feel an uneasy sense of the vulgarity of a new crown, manufactured by statesmen in a Cabinet. Children, and all unsophisticated people, feel the vulgarity of new rank, and of the lowest dignity, in an assemblage of high ranks. Every one understands that it may be better to be of high station among commoners than a new comer into the lowest order of the peerage. If it is so with the common dignities of society, how much stronger must the feeling be about that highest

¹ Hansard, xxiv. p. 1005.

position, whose main dignity is derived from associations of antiquity! But for historical associations, a crown has, in our age, absolutely nothing in it at all. If conferred by the united impulse of a nation, the honor of sovereignty is still the highest conceivable; but such a position is, in the present age of the world, one of leadership — one of personal responsibility — which is only impaired by reference to hereditary associations. There may have been reasons of policy for placing a crown on the apex of the destinies of Greece; but, whatever might be the tastes of the parties most nearly concerned, it is certain that the tastes of Western Europe were offended by the act of turning a venerable symbol into a politic bauble. And it is very conceivable that though a sensible man might, in the hope of usefulness and true honor, get over his objection to the insignia of his new office, it is no wonder that, upon the hope of usefulness and true honor being reduced to painful doubt, he should give way to his disgust, and decline the office and its titles and decorations together.

It was not till two years after this time, not till the year 1832 was far advanced, that the three Powers could procure the acceptance of the crown of Greece by a European Prince; and then the new sovereign was a mere boy. Otho, a younger son of the King of Bavaria, with nearly three years of his minority yet to run, went to Greece, as King, in December, 1833, with little chance of composing its dissensions, and affirming his empire. The only thing that can be said is, that, where a boy must fail, the ablest man might have succeeded no better.

CHAPTER X.

THE year 1830 opened gloomily,—not only in England, but throughout Europe, and even in America. In Russia, Distress. great efforts were made to raise subscriptions to feed the laboring classes, who were suffering, under the depression of agriculture, from bad seasons and other causes. Throughout the whole of Germany and Switzerland there were stirrings of discontent, which gave warning of revolutionary movements to follow. In the rural districts of the north of France, that strange madness of rick-burning, which afterwards spread fearfully in England, had begun. The educated classes of England spoke of it at first with contemptuous amazement, as showing the desperate ignorance of the rural population of France; not yet dreaming how soon the proof would be brought home to them, that our own agricultural laborers were in a similar condition of savagery. In the United States, the pressure upon the least opulent class was extreme; and that prosperous country came to the knowledge of real and extensive distress. At home, the distress was so fearful that even the sanguine Duke of Wellington, with all his slowness to see the dark side in politics, and all his unwillingness to depress his valetudinarian sovereign, felt himself obliged to take emphatic notice of it in the royal speech; and the debates on the address, which were keen and protracted in both Houses, turned chiefly on the dispute, whether the distress, which all admitted to be intolerable, was pervading or partial. The Duke maintained that there were some parts of the kingdom where the distress was not pressing; the opposition maintained that there were none. The Duke spoke of the ranges of new houses that were rising in the neighborhood of most of the large towns, and declared that he had heard of no complaints on the part of the retail traders: while his opponents looked upon these ranges of new houses as monuments of the speculative mania of five years before; declared that they stood empty, or that their inhabitants were pining with hunger within the walls, unable to pay rent, and allowed to remain only because the owners knew that they could get no other tenants, and it was better for new houses to be inhabited than left empty. The interest of money was never

known to be lower; and the manufacturers' stocks, with which their shelves were too well loaded, had suffered a depreciation of forty per cent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, we find, spoke, this session, of topics of "consolation," and no longer of "congratulation;" and one subject of earnest deliberation with the ministers was, whether they should propose a property-tax. They resolved against it; but the deliberation indicates the pressure of the time. The restless spirits of the mercantile and political world, who, in seasons of distress, want to be doing something for immediate relief, turned now, as usual, to the ready device of an issue of paper money. This was urgently demanded, not only by many half-informed people throughout the country, but by some who should at least have known that they had better not speak on this subject unless they understood it. This idea — of an issue of paper money — seems to have lain under the opposition to the address in both Houses, and to have been the real drift of the amendments proposed. And yet money was abundant throughout this period of distress; and, as has been said, the interest of money never was lower.

The national discontent with the government was very great; and the discontent of the government with itself was hardly less. The continuance of the Administration would not have been permitted for a day or an hour after the meeting of Parliament, but for one consideration, — the understood state of the Discontents. State of the King. King. And some members of the Administration would not have borne the galling yoke of their military chief's authority, if they could, with any honor or humanity, have left him, or known what to do with themselves when free.

The state of things was understood to be this: The King, always selfish, and swayed by his passions, had been an occasion of incessant difficulty to his ministers since the failure of his prosecution of his Queen. The sense of weakness and loss of self-respect consequent on that failure had added distrust of his servants to all the evil tempers which existed in him before. His caprices became incalculable. Like all jealous and suspicious people, he was fond of having little plots of his own, — sly ways of putting his ministers to the proof, or disconcerting and spiting them; so that, between this jealousy and his constitutional infirmity of purpose, matters had now come to such a pass that his decisions and commands were worth nothing. He changed his orders between night and morning, and held contradictory opinions or notions from day to day. It had become necessary to rule him first, in order to rule the country. By some means or other, he must be held to his pledges, and brought back to declared opinions, and supported in the enforcement of his orders. The Duke of Wellington could do this better than any one else.

At least, it was certain, that, if he failed, no one else could succeed. The times were too grave for any trifling,—for any ungenerous driving-on of party objects. Nothing would have been easier than to turn out the Wellington Ministry any day; and nothing could be harder than it was to some of the subordinates of the Premier to remain under his humiliating rule: but then no other government was possible in the existing state of affairs; and the consequences of leaving the King and country without a Ministry were too fearful to be braved by the hardiest. All were aware, too, that there must be a change before long, and every one was disposed to put off all struggles of parties till the fair opportunity of a new reign.

Rarely has a Minister held a more lonely position than the Duke of Wellington. Duke of Wellington did at this date. He had no party, no colleagues, no support of any kind, unless it were that questionable support of which the country heard much at the time,—of fashion in London drawing-rooms. There could hardly have been so many reports prevalent, and we could hardly meet with so many allusions to this kind of support in the records of the time, if there had not been some truth in the allegation, that the Duke was the fashion among the ladies in the higher circles in London, and that these talking ladies did no good to their hero, nor added any security to the chances of the perilous time by their exaltation of the despot of the day. Just as the court ladies of Charles X. were praising the vigor of Prince Polignac, the great ladies in London were praising the Duke of Wellington; and probably the consternation of the English ladies at what they saw before the year was out was nearly as great as that of the French ladies when they beheld their idol consigned to prison and civil death. Happily, however, the cases presented no further parallel. If Paris is France, London is not England; and England possesses a Parliament with which no Minister dreams of meddling, and a press which, as the Duke of Wellington found by an experience less disastrous than that of his friend Polignac, cannot be assailed with impunity.

First, for the Parliament—that is, the House of Commons—
State of parties. at this time. The opposition consisted of three parties, while the Ministerial party was nothing. Mr. Peel was the only Minister whom anybody saw or thought of in the Lower House; and his only natural and organized supporters were those who, under the name of adherents of the Ministry, have no opinions, or are never asked for any, and therefore afford no particular credit to a government. Mr. Peel was observed with intense interest, and spared or supported by a generous admiration and sympathy, which graced the time, but could not long have put off the struggle of parliament-

any conflict. The Premier and he had carried the Catholic question in the best possible manner and temper that the circumstances admitted. Mr. Peel's sacrifices were universally respected; his sincerity universally confided in, thus far; and his present difficult position generously considered. He stood, in fact, the supporter and administrator of liberal principles; and, in order to be fraternized with by the leaders of the liberal opposition, it was only necessary that he should also profess those principles which he was actually working out. For this he was evidently not yet ready. His heart could not yet be with those whom he had regarded as antagonists during his whole political life; his heart was naturally still with the allies with whom he had lived, and worked, and fought, till now. This was easily comprehended: and it was known that he had suffered much in his private and public relations on account of his recent political conduct; and that he must suffer under the stern rule of his chief; and that he must have his share of difficulty in the relations of the Cabinet with the King: and therefore was he observed with intense interest,—and time was given him,—and he was spared or supported by a generous admiration and sympathy. Mr. Canning had specially exempted him from censure for the secession which he complained of in every other case; the Liberals exempted him from the mockery and censure with which they visited his comrades in conversion on the Catholic question; and now, the liberal section of the opposition exempted him from the censure with which they visited the other managers of a perplexed and almost profitless session,—a session marked at the time as that which had exhibited most talk and least work of any since the Conquest.

The Premier's view of the opposition was, without disguise, one which did not secure him any indulgence from it. The bulk of the opposition was the liberal party, now strengthened and graced by an abundance of parliamentary talent, while its weakness of administrative ability was, of course, not yet shown; and animated by victory, hope, and expectation. Another powerful though small party, in opposition, was that of the "Canningites," led by Mr. Huskisson in these his last days. The old Tories made up the third party,—not a very numerous one, but strong in the energies of grief, disappointment, and fear. The Duke's tactics were well understood. He expected to hold his position, by playing off these parties against each other. He did not see, as others did, that the causes of their disunion had mainly disappeared; while, amidst the heavings of this volcanic time, new ground had arisen on which they might stand together, and look abroad upon the agitations of the political sea. The Duke was blind to this, because he was not yet aware of the critical charac-

ter of the times. He had seen the dangers of Ireland, and shown that he could yield to necessity, and do what was required. But he did not comprehend the state of France, nor entertain the least doubt that his friend Polignac would conquer there; and he was to speak a few words, the next November, which should show the existing generation and a remote posterity that the needs and destinies of England were no clearer to him than, as he should by that time have learned, were now those of France.

As for the union which was possible and probable between these three opposition parties, — a union more probable at present than any practical antagonism, — it must be remembered that a touchstone of political integrity had been applied universally in the Catholic emancipation measure. It was now clear which men had opinions, and could hold to them. No one could be present at the debates of this session, and not see that a new feeling of mutual respect had grown up between the prominent men who had for life advocated, and for life opposed, Catholic emancipation. The dignity of irresistible victory belonged to the one set, and the dignity of adherence to conviction under the new adversity of opposition belonged to the other; and the mutual recognition attracted both to a cordial co-operation on questions on which they happened to agree. Then, again, the Huskisson party was strongly united with the Tories on the subject of parliamentary reform, and with the Liberals on that of free-trade. And a clear understanding could not but exist among all the three in regard to the Wellington Administration, — that it could not, and must not, continue long; and that the utmost care and delicacy were necessary to support it as long as it was necessary, and to displace it in the least perilous time and manner. It is the belief of many, that the Premier was slow in becoming aware that he held office by the mercy of the opposition which he had expected to manage and control. It is certain that his experience with regard to Irish questions had not yet humbled him enough, and that the coming year was one of most painful discipline to him. He was first to learn, in the spring, however slow he might be in receiving the lesson, that his government was in itself quite powerless; and next, in the summer, how France spurned the government which had not beforehand seemed to him monstrous; and in the autumn, — but that lesson shall be revealed in its own time. In the long life of the Duke of Wellington, perhaps no one year has taught him so much political truth, under a regimen of such severe discipline, as the year 1830.

He began the year with a course of action so weak and blind as really helped to justify the popular belief in France, and in some quarters at home, that he and Prince Polignac were, if not

in league, at least actuated by strong sympathy. He began the year with a war, on his own account, against the press.

Perhaps no act of the Duke of Wellington's has ever injured him so much as this. It instantly lessened his power, ^{Press prosecutions.} and wholly altered the popular estimate of his character. Much of his power was derived from the impression, till then universal, that his self-reliance was not only indomitable, but so lofty as to be beyond the reach of foolish or malignant censure. Some persons had been rather surprised at his condescending to quarrel with Lord Winchilsea's random assertions; but now, when he directed the Attorney-general to prosecute the "Morning Journal" for libels against the King, the government, and himself individually, people looked at one another, and asked whether this could be the man who was supposed to have the world under his feet. The libels complained of were very abusive; but they were, for the most part, extremely vague. One allegation of corruption, supposed to refer to the Lord Chancellor, was distinct; and it might, perhaps, be necessary to the reputation of a judge to rebut it: but, when the Lord Chancellor proceeded to prosecute on his own account, the editor of the paper made an affidavit that the charge did not refer to the Lord Chancellor. Upon this, the government pursued the charge, instituting a new prosecution for the same libel, as affecting some one member of the government, whoever he might be; and this proceeding, taking place after the defendant had disclosed his line of defence, was universally regarded as harsh and vindictive. But it was reasonable in comparison with the other prosecutions, which were for such vague charges as "treachery, cowardice, and artifice," and such gossip as that the King had been observed to look coldly on the Duke of Wellington, and giving hints of the reasons why the King did not appear in public. It was no small humiliation to the Duke, that he had to be reminded by the verdict of the jury, on the second of the three trials, that the time succeeding the passage of the Catholic-Relief Bills was one of extreme excitement, when some allowance should be made for vehemence of temper, and intemperance of language. The Prime Minister, who best knew the opposition of men's minds, should have been the first to make this allowance; and that he did not, materially damaged his reputation. The private chaplain of the Duke of Cumberland avowed himself the author of some of the libels; yet the printer and publisher were pursued for them. The Duke's plea was, that such publications prevented the public excitement from subsiding; but there could be no doubt of the irritation being greatly aggravated by the prosecutions themselves. The Whig Attorney-general, who remained in the Ministry on the ground of the

government being conducted on Whig principles, never recovered the ground he lost in the national esteem by these prosecutions. Mr. Scarlett after this obtained dignities, office, and title; but he was always felt to be a fallen man. Some contemporaries ascribed the whole proceeding to his, as others did to Prince Polignac's, influence over the mind of the Duke of Wellington. The "Examiner" of that date says of the proceeding: "This may be hypochondria, or it may be Scarlett; for surely it cannot be intended to countenance the measures of Prince Polignac, and to persecute the press with a view to preserving conformity of councils. The coincidence is, at least, curious."¹ Under any supposition, — whether the Duke was spontaneously despotic, or whether he was wrought upon by Prince Polignac on the one hand, or Mr. Scarlett on the other, — the reputation of the Ministry, and especially of the Premier, was deeply injured by these conflicts with the press. The editor of the "Morning Journal," and one of the proprietors, were punished by fine and imprisonment.²

The King's speech, delivered by commission on the 4th of February, announced the peace concluded between Russia and Turkey; the continuance of the Portuguese quarrel; the distress among the agricultural and manufacturing classes at home; and the hope of the government, that considerable reductions of expenditure might take place, without injury to the public service.³ The subject of improvements in the administration of the law was also recommended to the consideration of Parliament; and measures were announced to answer this object, and prepare for a revision of the practice and proceedings of the superior courts.

Before the ministers could announce their plans of retrenchment, they formally pledged themselves to the principle and practice, to be pursued without hesitation or delay. Only a week after the opening of Parliament, Sir James Graham brought forward a motion for a general reduction of the salaries of official persons, on the ground of the restoration of the value of money by Mr. Peel's Bill of 1819. This motion was withdrawn in favor of a resolution proposed by Mr. Dawson, Secretary to the Treasury, urging, in the form of an address to the King, reduction of the persons employed in the departments of civil government, and of their salaries. Mr. Hume's motion for a Committee of Economical Inquiry was also withdrawn, that the ministers might be left free to produce their plan. They did this on the 19th of February.

Such reductions as were now to be proposed almost always

¹ England's Seven Administrations, ii. p. 27. ² Annual Register, 1880, p. 5.

³ Hansard, xxii. p. 1.

disappoint the popular expectation, because they must necessarily bear a very small proportion to the vast expenditure of a country ancient enough in its form of government and society to inherit the consequences of old financial errors, and to lie under heavy obligations of good faith. Not only ignorant demagogues in remote districts of the country, but some members of the House, who should understand the history of British finance better than they do, point to the large amount of annual expenditure, and then to the small proposals of reduction, and scoff at the Administration of the day; taking no pains to separate the expenditure of the Administration of the day from that to which the present generation is bound by the pledges of a former one. On the present occasion, there was less of this method of complaint than usual; leading members in each section of opposition making haste to declare, that the reductions proposed went beyond their expectations. The reductions amounted altogether to 1,300,000*l.*; a large sum out of the 12,000,000*l.* from which alone they could be deducted; but not an amount whose remission would be any effectual relief to the country. All who knew best, in each party, agreed that nothing further could at present be done in the departments of the army and navy, — a conclusion which was not, however, allowed to pass without some severe taunting of the ministers about the state of Ireland, which would not yet admit of any diminution of the military force stationed there. It had been concluded too hastily, some months before, that the pacification of Ireland would follow upon the relief of the Catholics; and now Mr. Peel's mention of "the two great hostile parties in Ireland" was received with ironical congratulations by those who did not see that the disturbed state of Ireland was owing to the long delay of the measure of emancipation, which had exasperated the passions of parties to an indomitable point.

The duties removed were those on beer, cider, and leather, by which the direct relief to the people was calculated at 3,400,000*l.*; and the indirect at so much more as ^{Removal of duties.} would justify an estimate of 5,000,000*l.* for the whole boon. A prospect was held out of reducing the interest on some portions of the national debt; and a searching examination was going forward, in every department of government, into the minutest divisions of the public expenditure. This session gave the most important financial relief to the nation of any since the peace; and the acknowledgments of this by the liberal members of opposition were full and gracious. Mr. Baring regretted that the project of annually paying off a portion of the principal of the national debt was surrendered for the sake of present relief; but most people thought that the fact of a deficit was hint enough to attend first to the immediate pressure upon the people. The

repeal of the beer-duty met with great opposition from the landed interest in the House, who would have preferred a repeal of the malt-tax; and from the agitation of the brewers and publicans, who were alarmed at the idea of cheap beer, and of the throwing-open of the trade which was proposed to take place at the same time. But the measures suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer were all carried.

The government had promised, at the close of the preceding session, that a Committee of Parliament should be appointed this year to consider the whole subject of the jurisdiction and charter of the East-India Company, as that charter was soon to expire. A committee was accordingly appointed this spring, the vast importance of its duties being emphatically indicated by Mr. Peel. The subjects of the Company had been computed to amount to ninety millions; and the welfare of millions more was implicated with theirs: it was therefore impossible to overrate the seriousness of the inquiry, whether the territorial and commercial powers of the Company should be continued; and, if continued, on what understanding and what terms. The Company had kept silence as to their own desires and intentions; the government had no propositions to make, or opinions to express; and the committee entered upon its work with every possible appearance of impartiality, and security for it. There was some remonstrance, here and there, about the appointment of three or four India directors to serve on the committee; but the objection gave way before the need that was felt of their information on the affairs of India and of the Company. The result of the investigations of this committee will appear hereafter.

The speech had referred to proposed improvements in the administration of the law. One great improvement which took place this session — an incident so remarkable as to deserve special mention — was the removal of an unjust judge.¹ The Crown was addressed by both Houses of Parliament, praying for the removal of the Judge of the High Court of Admiralty in Ireland, — Sir Jonah Barrington, — who had been lately discovered to have been guilty of malversation in the years 1805, 1806, and 1810. The facts were clear; and part of the evidence consisted of documents in the handwriting of the accused, which showed that he had appropriated to his own use some of the proceeds of derelict vessels adjudicated on by himself. He was, of course, removed. The shock which this proceeding caused throughout the country testified strongly to the confidence — so unhesitating as to become natural — which society in England has in the integrity of its judges.

¹ Annual Register, 1830, p. 127.

An important alteration in the administration of the law was, that Wales was annexed to the English judicature, its own separate system being abolished.¹ Instead of Welsh and Scotch judicature. twelve, there were to be henceforward fifteen English judges; a new judge being added to each of the three courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer. In Scotland two courts were abolished,—the High Court of Admiralty and the Commissary Court; and thus the Court of Session had more to do. It was thought, however, that the Court of Session had still more judges than were necessary; and their number was reduced from fifteen to thirteen.

Mr. Peel brought in a Bill, on the 1st of April, to circumscribe the infliction of the punishment of death for forgery.² He proposed to abolish the death-penalty in all cases where the forgery could have been defied by any degree whatever of care on the part of the person injured, preserving it only in cases of the forgery of the great seal, the privy seal, and the sign-manual; in forgeries of wills, on the public funds, on bank or money notes or orders, or representatives of money in any shape. This Bill, important as it was, did not meet the views of those who believed that the punishment of death for forgery did not discourage the crime, and did hinder conviction for it; and Sir James Mackintosh proposed and carried a clause repealing the penalty in all cases of forgery but that of wills. The Lords restored the Bill to its original state, and sent it down so late in the session as to cause a question whether it should be accepted in the Commons, or thrown out, in the moral certainty that no lives would be forfeited under portions of a law which it was understood would be repealed in a few months. On the whole, it was thought best to take at once what was offered, and seek the rest hereafter; and Mr. Peel's Bill passed.

The cause of the Jews was advocated strongly in the House this session, as it was likely to be after the admission Jewish disabilities. of the Catholics to Parliament. Mr. Robert Grant opened the subject, and was supported at once by many of the ablest men in the House; and afterwards by a considerable body of petitions from the towns. There was a majority of 18 in favor of the introduction of the Bill; but it was thrown out on the second reading by a majority of 228 over 165.³ The arguments against the admission of the Jews to Parliament were of the usual untenable and mutually contradictory sort. The Jews were too few to be worth regarding; but they would overthrow the Christianity of the legislature: some Jews once hated the Founder of Christianity, and therefore all Jews would now seek

¹ Annual Register, 1830, p. 130.

² Forgery, Hansard, xxiii. 1176.

³ Hansard, xxiii. 1336.

to overthrow his Church. Nobody wished it ; and then, again, the desire to favor Jews showed the prevalent disposition to infidelity. All the petitions on the subject were in favor of the Jews ; there was not one against them : and this proved how carefully they must be kept out, as a class of infidels powerful through popular sympathy. The most amusing plea was, that it was unreasonable to admit Jews, while Quakers were excluded ; to which the friends of the Jews replied, by offering to admit the Quakers immediately. To us it is strange to look back now, and see how long ago the Quakers were admitted, while the Jews still stand waiting outside ; it is strange to think, that that method of management still subsists by which the hypocrite and lax holder of opinion find entrance without difficulty to the national councils, while the conscientious Jew, one of a body of singularly loyal and orderly and useful subjects, is excluded on account of a difference of belief on matters which, as is shown by the fundamental diversities of faith which exist within the walls of Parliament, can have nothing to do with the business which goes forward there. The real difficulty probably is, in all such cases, that men suppose a proselyting tendency in all who differ from themselves. In the case of the Catholics, there might be some color of a reason for such an apprehension ; but, as everybody ought to know, there can be none such in the case of a Jew. A Jew no more desires to make Gentiles Jews, than a peer desires to make all the commonalty peers. In both cases, the privilege must come from the fountain of privilege ; and its value lies mainly in its restriction. The Jews consider themselves the peerage of the human race, and accordingly have no tendency to proselytism.

At the beginning of this session, it is probable that no one Parliamentary foresaw what a vigorous growth of the political life reform. of the nation was about to take place through the agitation of the question of parliamentary reform. This was beyond human foresight ; because as yet the French Revolution had not taken place, and its stimulating influence upon the politics of England could not be anticipated. But the subject of parliamentary reform was not neglected. The Marquis of Blandford was still too angry with Parliament for passing the Catholic-Relief Bill, still too firmly persuaded that the people of England were averse to Catholic emancipation, to give up his attempt to destroy the existing constitution of the House of Commons. The spectacle is curious of the zeal of this violent anti-Catholic gentleman, in the most "radical and revolutionary" question of the day ; a zeal so vehement and rash, that long-avowed advocates of reform of Parliament could by no means keep it in check, or prevent its throwing ridicule on their great cause.

The Marquis of Blandford moved a very extraordinary amendment to the address on the 5th of February,—an amendment which he called a “wholesome admonition to the throne.”¹ This amendment declared—what would have astonished the King very much, if it had been carried—that the House was determined that His Majesty should not be the only person in his dominions left ignorant of the astounding fact of the deep and universal distress of the nation, and the consequent impending danger to the throne, and all the venerable institutions of the country. The reason assigned for the distress was the deviation from the true principle of representation, shown in the existence of purchasable seats in Parliament; by means of which the House was filled with men who considered their own interests alone, and heaped a ruinous weight of taxation upon the country; to remedy which, the King was exhorted to revert to the wisdom of our ancestors, and to make the House of Commons once more a representation of the popular will. On account of the truth mixed up with exaggeration and error in the long amendment of the marquis, several of the liberal members voted for it: but all agreed, that the subject was too vast and important to be dealt with as an amendment on the address; and that a more definite statement of the object desired must be proposed before the House could pass a really useful vote on any part of the subject.

As early as the 18th of the same month, accordingly, the marquis was ready to put the House in possession of his plan.² Though the French Revolution had not yet happened, the old Tories might be excused for thinking that the world was coming to an end, when they saw the Marquis of Blandford making advances to Mr. O’Connell, in promotion of the most “revolutionary project” of the century; and Mr. O’Connell, again, fraternizing with the Polignac Ministry and the Bourbons, and expending all the virulence of his abuse on the Liberals of France. We have on record some of the sayings of the time, which reveal the state of men’s minds. First, we have the old Tory, Lord Eldon,³ who writes of the Wellington policy as “establishing a precedent so dangerous, so encouraging to the present attempts at revolution under the name of reform, that he must be, in my judgment, a very bold fool who does not tremble at what seems to be fast approaching. Look, too, at France. The ministers beat in the Chambers, on the first day, by a very considerable majority! What the Duke of Wellington will do, I pretend not to guess. What will be said now about the fact that all the occasional laws against sedition have

¹ Hansard, xxii. p. 170.

³ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 107.

² Hansard, xxii. p. 678.

been suffered to expire? Heaven save us now! for in man there is no sufficient help." Then we have the Tory turned Radical, by the consternation which only plunged Lord Eldon "in very low spirits." The Marquis of Blandford said, that "the honorable and learned member for Clare had expressed sentiments on this momentous topic in which he most cordially concurred. He was happy to see that honorable gentleman devote his talents to the reprobation of so execrable a system, and he could assure him that he would gladly join heart and hand with so efficient a co-adjutor in procuring its abolition."¹ And next we have this member for Clare, this efficient co-adjutor in the cause of parliamentary reform in London, vituperating the men who were risking their all in vindicating the principle of parliamentary representation in Paris. "I a Liberal!"² exclaims Mr. O'Connell, at this juncture. "No: I despise the French Liberals. I consider them the enemies, not only of religion, but of liberty; and I am thoroughly convinced, that religion is the only secure basis of human freedom." The assumption, that, because the French Liberals resisted tyranny, they therefore resisted religion, is worthy of Lord Eldon; but a stroke of absurdity follows, too gross for even Lord Eldon. Mr. O'Connell summed up by declaring himself a Benthamite. To the end of his days, he cherished his hatred of all Liberalism in France, probably from his leaning towards the authority of the Jesuits. That he had no faith in the Orleans family, and no congratulations to offer on their accession, is not to be wondered at; but his loyalty to the old Bourbons was a trait which, in the self-styled Liberator of Ireland, was too much for most men's gravity. "The Liberals," he rashly and ignorantly declared, "do not desire any liberty save that of crushing religion, and once again imbruing their hands in the blood of the clergy,"—an assertion which is merely an exaggeration of the terrors of the "Protestant" members of the House of Lords about the Irish Liberals. Such were some of the curious incidents of the time.

The Marquis of Blandford's plan was radical indeed.³ He proposed that a committee of Parliament should be chosen by ballot, who should inquire into the condition of all the cities and boroughs in the kingdom, and should report to the Home Secretary all that had forfeited the fair conditions of representation; as if this last was a point so clear as to be left to the decision of any "committee chosen by ballot"! The Home Secretary was immediately to notify the forfeiture to these constituencies and to the public through the "Gazette;" and the vacancies were to

¹ Hansard, xxii. p. 170.

² England's Seven Administrations, i. p. 258.

³ Hansard, xxii. p. 688.

be filled up by representation of large towns, hitherto excluded. No compensation was to be given to the proprietors of disfranchised boroughs, unless such conciliation should be absolutely requisite to the passage of the measure. All members were to be paid; city and borough representatives two pounds, and county members four pounds, per day; and all were to have been hitherto residents among the constituencies which they represented. Copyholders and certain leaseholders were to enjoy the franchise; and Scotland was to be placed on the same footing with England. The most obvious objection here is to the vagueness about the true principle of representation, by which the committee were to try the existing state of the cities and boroughs of England. If, as the mover declared, abundant information and authority were to be found in the law and history of England, it was clearly necessary to find and arrange them—to fix the test—before proceeding to the trial.¹ That such a proposition should be entertained at all, and debated through a long sitting, showed the earnestness that existed for some measure of parliamentary reform. Lord Althorp moved, as an amendment, at a late hour, the resolution, “That it is the opinion of this House that a reform in the representation of the people is necessary.” The majority against the amendment was 113; and then the original motion was negatived.²

The question about the destiny of East Retford was brought forward again; that question which had cost Mr. Huskisson his seat in the government, two years before.³ He voted as formerly; and there were 99 votes in favor of the transference of the representation to Birmingham; but 126 voted on the other side, and thus, in the opinion of many, cast the die which turned up “revolution.” There are many who believe, at this day, that, if the representation of Birmingham had been permitted at that time, a bit-by-bit reform would have taken place, instead of the sweeping measure which its enemies might be permitted to call “revolution.” In Mr. Huskisson’s speech on this occasion, we find the first historical mention of the political unions, which were now to form so prominent a feature of the times. The notice was this: “He saw in Birmingham, lately, an association which, as far as he could perceive its elements, principles, and operations, seemed exactly formed on the model of the Catholic Association; for it had its subscriptions, its funds, its meetings, its discussions, and its agitator. The purpose of this association was to raise a universal cry for parliamentary reform,—to carry the question by exaggerating the difficulties, abuses, and distresses of the country. Admiring, as

¹ Hansard, xxii. p. 697.

² Hansard, xxii. p. 724.

³ Hansard, xx. p. 724.

he did, the talent of the gentleman who took the lead (Mr. Attwood) at the Birmingham meeting, he, for one, would much rather see that gentleman in the House of Commons,—as fortunately he saw the honorable member for Clare in the House of Commons. He would rather see the leader of the Birmingham meeting here as the representative of that town, than in conducting such an association, sending forth those statements and appeals to the country, which was, perhaps, too prone, at the present moment, to act on the apprehensions generated by them.”¹ Is it possible that Mr. Huskisson did not see,—he who had so clear an eye for some things less evident,—that, when the attention of any portion of the English people is once fairly fixed on the principle of any one of their institutions, the yielding of a single point of detail can never satisfy them? If Birmingham had at that time obtained representation, and had sent Mr. Attwood to Parliament, did he suppose that the Birmingham Union would have dissolved, any more than the Catholic Association would have dissolved, if Mr. O’Connell had been permitted to take his seat after his first election for Clare? The Birmingham Political Union was formed for the promotion of the whole question of parliamentary reform, and not only for obtaining a representation of its own town. If this enfranchisement had been granted now, the success would have stimulated Manchester and Leeds, and other places, to a similar pursuit of their object; and then the old Tories would have charged the government with the consequences of yielding to popular movements. As it was, the denial answered the same purpose, of stimulating the popular will. The truth was, the time was come for the change. It mattered little, except as to the tempers of the parties concerned, whether government gave assent or denial. The time was come for the rending of the garments which the nation’s life had outgrown; and the agreement or refusal to mend the first slit could make but the difference of a day in the providing of a new suit. The Duke of Wellington was soon to show that he saw nothing of this; but, if Mr. Huskisson did not, it is only a fresh proof how little those who stand in the midst of a crowd of events can see before them.

Lord John Russell brought forward the subject of the representation of large towns, by moving for leave to bring in a Bill to enable Birmingham, Manchester, and Leeds to return members to the House of Commons; and this was the occasion of Mr. Huskisson’s last speech on parliamentary reform. He supported the motion, but under protest against any extension of the boon beyond special and very pressing cases. There is an interest in reading his statement of his views, though his views

¹ Hansard, xxii. p. 347.

may not be ours, as the last words we shall be able to give of one whose memory will ever be precious to his country. "To such a measure of reform," as the present, "he should give his cordial support."¹ As to a more extensive parliamentary reform—a measure founded upon the principle of a general revision, reconstruction, and remodelling of our present Constitution—to such a general revision and change of our Constitution, he had been always opposed; and, while he had a seat in that House, he should give it his most decided opposition. He conceived, that, if such an extensive reform were effected, they might go on for two or three sessions in good and easy times, and such a reformed parliament might adapt itself to our mode of government, and the ordinary concerns of the country; but, if such an extensive change were effected in the Constitution of Parliament, sure he was, that, whenever an occasion arose of great popular excitement or re-action, the consequence would be a total subversion of our Constitution, followed by complete confusion and anarchy, terminating first in the tyranny of a fierce democracy, and then in that of a military despotism,—these two great calamities maintaining that natural order of succession which they have always been hitherto seen to observe. He was therefore opposed to such an extensive change and revision of our representative system. It might be easy to raise objections to the boroughs, and, by separating the representative system into its various constituent parts, to point out evils and abuses in several of them; but it was a waste of time, and a perversion of common sense, to look at it in that way. He would take it as a whole; and, regarding our present system as one aggregate, he was opposed to any material change in it."

Weak words,—to be the last from such a man! With the explosive elements of wrong involved, as he allowed, in this aggregate, was the entireness to be best preserved by leaving the explosive elements to burst and shatter every thing connected with them, or by taking them out while they might yet be safely handled? These were weak words to be the last from such a man; but the wisest men are weak when they prophesy of the future under the instigation of fear instead of the inspiration of faith. The motion was lost by a majority of 48. The subject was brought up again in May, however, when Lord John Russell took occasion to propose two resolutions in the place of a motion of Mr. O'Connell's, which was negatived. Mr. O'Connell's motion was for leave to bring in a Bill to establish universal suffrage, triennial parliaments, and vote by ballot. Lord John Russell's resolutions were in favor of an increase in the number of representatives, and for the additional ones being given to large

¹ Hansard, xxii. p. 891.

towns and populous counties.¹ This incessant bringing-up of the subject during the session, by Tory, Whig, and Radical leaders, testifies to the progress of the question in the national will. The French Revolution might accelerate the demand and the movement; but these preceding transactions show that parliamentary reform would have been required and obtained without the awakening of any new sympathy with any foreign people.

The man in all England who, at this critical season, did most to promote the cause of parliamentary reform, was the Duke of Newcastle. He made an avowal so broad and clear of his belief, that the franchises of the citizens of Newark were his own, as much as any property whatever that he held, that many were startled into a contemplation of the actual system itself, who might otherwise have continued to argue about mere words. The independent voters of Newark sent up a petition to Parliament complaining of the undue influence of the Duke of Newcastle in the elections, which he exercised without any apparent recollection of the statute which prohibits the interference of Peers in elections.² The Duke's influence was mainly derived from his being the lessee of crown-lands, amounting to 960 acres, which formed a sort of belt round three-fourths of the town of Newark. The ministers declared plainly in the House, that they had no intention of renewing the lease of these lands to the Duke of Newcastle; and this being the case, and the exposure and disgrace very complete, the committee asked for was considered by the majority not to be needful. The most really useful part of the affair, however, was the innocent amazement of the Peer himself at such an interference with his use of his influence; an amazement expressed in words which were never let drop for a day during the continuance of the reform agitation, and which are a proverb to this hour: "May I not do what I will with mine own?" He had looked upon the electors of Newark as his "own:" but the 587 who had resisted his dictation, and striven to return an independent member, were very far from answering to the Peer's notion of what Newark electors ought to be; and a great blessing the country from this time felt it to be, that there were 587 electors within the Duke's belt of land who were not his "own."

The general impression, that the King was very ill, continued in the absence of all reliable information about his illness of the King. state, and notwithstanding the activity of the preparations for his customary birthday fête in April. It became known at length, however, that those preparations were countermanded; and, on the 15th of April, His Majesty's physicians issued a bulletin, announcing that the King was ill of a bilious attack,

¹ Hansard, xxiv. pp. 1223-24.

² Hansard, xxii. p. 1084.

accompanied with difficulty in breathing. The bulletins during this illness were extraordinarily deceptive; and the nation was kept as nearly as possible in the dark about the King's state to the last,—almost every bulletin declaring him better, till, as a contemporary observed, "Amidst these accumulated betternesses, the nation was wondering why he was not well, when it heard that he was dead." It is supposed that the King insisted on seeing the bulletins, and that the physicians feared the responsibility of making them true. This is a mockery which should have been prevented by some means or other. On the 24th of May, however, a message from the King to both Houses of Parliament, indicated the truth. The message told that the King was so ill that it was inconvenient and painful to him to sign papers with his own hand, and that he relied on the readiness of Parliament to consider without delay how he might be relieved of this labor.¹ There was no doubt in this case about the reality of the bodily illness, nor of the ability of the King to understand and give orders about the business brought before him: but the danger of the precedent was very properly kept in view; and the provision for affixing the sign-manual without trouble to the King was fenced about with all possible precautions, which could prevent the authority from being used by the creatures of an insane sovereign. The stamp was to be affixed in the King's presence, by his immediate order, given by word of mouth, to obviate mistake of any sign by head or hand; a memorandum of the circumstances must accompany the stamp; and the document stamped must be previously indorsed by three members of the Privy-council. The operation of the Bill was limited to the present session, that, if the King's illness should continue, the irregular authority asked for must be renewed at short intervals. The Bill was passed on the 28th of May; and the occasion for its use was over within a month. The King died at three o'clock in the morning of the 26th of June. The final ^{Death of the} struggle was sudden and short. He was sitting up ^{King.} when he felt what appears to be the peculiar and unmistakable sensation of death. He leaned his head on the shoulder of a page; exclaimed, "O God! this is death!" and was gone.² The immediate cause was the rupture of a blood-vessel in the stomach. Ossification of some of the large vessels about the heart had begun many years previously; and, before the end, the complication of diseases had become terrible.

The Kings of England and France were beckoned down from their thrones nearly at the same time. George IV. died just after his brother of France had issued his canvassing proclama-

¹ Hansard, xxiv. p. 986.

² Annual Register, 1830, p. 132.

tion, — his last words to his people, — and before the result could be known; and both sovereigns were in a state of discontent, anger, and fear at the state of the popular mind, and in view of the future. Two men more unhappy than they were at this time could hardly have been found in the dominions of both.

It would indeed be difficult to point to a more unhappy life, Life and character. through its whole extent, than that of George IV. Nothing went well with him; and, as his troubles came chiefly from within, he had none of the compensations which have waited upon the most unfortunate of kings. Kings defeated, captive, dethroned, — or diseased in body, or betrayed in their domestic relations, — have usually had solace from noble emotions, strenuous acts, or sweet domestic affections. But our unhappy King had none of these. Through life he achieved nothing. He was neither a warrior, nor a statesman, nor a student, nor a domestic man. If he had been even a mechanic, like Louis XVI. the locksmith, it would have been something. He was nothing but the man of pleasure; and, even in an ordinary rank, no one leads such a life of pain as the man of pleasure. In his rank, where real companionship is out of the question, even that life of pain is deprived of its chief solace, — the fellowship of comrades. The “first gentleman in Europe” might make himself as vulgar as he would in the pursuits of dissipation; he was still Prince, and therefore excluded from the hilarity which cannot exist where there is not equality.

His youth was unhappy. His parents disliked and restricted him, and thus drove him early into distrust and offence. What his married life was, is seen in the story of his Queen. If he loved his only child, she did not love him; and he lost her. He had no friends; and, if he chose to give that name to any of his counsellors, he knew that he had often their disapprobation and their compassion. Between himself and his people there was no tie, nor any pretence of one. He never showed the least desire for their happiness, which involved any personal sacrifice. He showed himself capable of petty resentments: he showed himself incapable of magnanimity. He let it be seen that the best government of his reign took place against his will, while he attempted disgraceful acts which did not succeed. He surrounded himself with persons whom the nation could not respect, while his selfish prodigality at their expense checked every growth of that loyalty which springs from personal attachment and esteem. Faulty as was his temper, his principles were no better. We have seen in the course of this history, that his word was utterly unreliable; and other proofs stood out from the whole surface of his life. If it is asked whether there was no good to set against this amount of evil, the only answer, probably, that could be

given by those most disposed in his favor is, that he was kindly and warm in his feelings towards those whom he took for his companions, whatever their deserts; and that he could be extremely agreeable and winning, and even outwardly dignified, when he chose. Like all princes, he had his flatterers; and, while he lived, praises of the sovereign were afloat, as they are in every reign. The glories and blessings which accrued to the nation in his time, naturally appeared to belong more or less to him at the moment. But it is not so after the lapse of twenty years. When we now look back upon the close of the war, the breaking-up of the Holy Alliance, the reduction of taxation, the improvement in freedom of speech and the press, the emancipation of the Dissenters and the Catholics, and the establishment of the principle and some of the practice of free-trade, we involuntarily regard these as the acts and experience of a nation without a head. If it is now a conviction very common among us, that, besides that irresistible influence which emanates from personal character, the sovereign has, with us, no longer any power but for obstruction, it is certain that no one person has done so much to ripen and extend this conviction as George IV. He declined the noble prerogative of rule over the heart and mind of his people by personal qualities, while using such opportunities as he had of reminding them of his obstructive power; and his death was received by them with an indifference proportioned to such deserts.

He died in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and the eleventh of his reign; previous to which he had held the regency for ten years.

CHAPTER XI.

At the close of the first reign since the peace, it is easy to see that a great improvement in the national welfare had taken place, though the period was in itself one of gloom and agitation. The old Tory rule was broken up, like an ice-field in spring, and the winds were all abroad to prevent its re-uniting. There were obstacles ahead; but so many were floating away behind, that the expectation of progress was clear and strong. On every account, it was a good thing that the old Tory rule was broken up; but chiefly for this,—that when the thing was done by the strong compulsion of fact, of necessity, men were beginning to look for the principle of the change, and thereby to obtain some insight into the views of the parties that had governed, or would or might govern, the country. Men began to have some practical conception, that the Tories thought it their duty to govern the people (for their good) as a disposable property; that the Whigs thought it their duty to govern as trustees of the nation, according to their own discretion; and that there were persons living and effectually moving in the world of politics, who thought that the people ought to govern themselves through the House of Commons. This perception once awakened, a new time had from that moment begun, of which we are at this day very far from seeing the end. With the departure of George IV. into the region of the past, we are taking leave of the old time, and can almost join in even Lord Eldon's declarations about the passing-away of the things that had been; and the incoming of a new and portentous age of the national history, though we do not sympathize in his terrors and regrets, nor agree with him that what had been dropped was that which should have been retained, and that whatever should supervene was to be deprecated because it was new. We have, what the old Tories have not, and cannot conceive of,—the deepest satisfaction in every proof that the national soul is alive and awake, that the national mind is up and stirring. There was proof of this, at the close of this reign, in what had been done, and in what was clearly about to be done; and this trumpet-call to advance was heard above loud groans of suffering, and

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the reign.

deep sighs of depression; and the nation marshalled itself for the advance accordingly.

As for the facts of what had been done, the old Tory rule by hereditary custom, or an understanding among the "great families" whom Mr. Canning so mortally ^{Achievements.} offended, was broken up. Exclusion from social right and privilege on account of religious opinion was broken up; that is, the system was, as a whole, though some partial exclusion remained, and remains to this day. In the same manner, the system of commercial restriction was broken up, though in practice monopoly was as yet far more extensive than liberty of commerce. Slavery was brought up for trial at the tribunal of the national conscience; and, whatever might be the issue, impunity at least was at an end. The delusion of the perfection of existing law was at an end; and the national conscience was appealed to, to denounce legal vengeance and cruelty, to substitute justice in their place. Hope had dawned for the most miserable classes of society; for, while some of the first men in the nation were contending for an amelioration of the criminal law in Parliament, one of the first women of her time was going through the prisons, to watch over and enlighten the victims of sin and ignorance. The admission of a new order of men into the Cabinet; the bending of the old order, even of the iron Duke himself, to their policy; the emancipation of Dissenters and Catholics; the adoption of some measures on behalf of slaves; the partial adoption of free-trade; the continued ameliorations of the criminal law through the efforts of Sir S. Romilly, Mr. Peel, and Sir James Mackintosh; and the interest excited in the condition of prisoners by the exertions of Mrs. Fry,—are features in the domestic policy of England, which must mark for ever as illustrious the first reign succeeding the peace.

Its chief misfortune, perhaps, is, that it introduced a method, which some consider a principle of government,—which cannot, from its nature, be permanent, and which no one would wish to be so. Now began, with the Catholic-relief measure, that practice of granting to clamor and intimidation what would not otherwise have been granted, which has ever since been the most unfavorable feature of our political history. The mischief began with the delay in granting the Catholics their fair claims; and those who caused that delay are answerable for the mischief. They are doubtless right in deprecating the evil, and in calling it a revolutionary symptom or fact; but they are wrong in laying it at any door but their own. It was not till the Whigs came into power that the greatness of the evil was evident to everybody; and then, when the Whigs alone were blamed for it, the censure was unjust. The earlier liberal measures were pushed forward

in good time. Mr. Canning's foreign policy, and Mr. Huskisson's free-trade, and all the ameliorations of the criminal law, were the results of the ideas of the men who offered them,—offered before the nation was ready to demand them in a way not to be refused. With Catholic emancipation the change came. The leading members of the government avowed their disinclination for the measure, and that it was extorted by necessity. In the story which we shall have next to tell, we shall see the consequences. They did not appear immediately; for, though reform of Parliament would have been extorted from an unwilling government, there was happily a willing government ready to grant it. It was as much the result of the ideas of the men who gave it as Mr. Canning's foreign policy, and Mr. Huskisson's free-trade; and all the world knew that the members of the government had advocated this reform for long years past, through evil and through good report; and they could, therefore, now bestow the boon with consummate grace. But the history of other transactions will not prove so gratifying. We shall have occasion to see how the Whigs were, not only what all rulers of our day must be,—the servants, instead of the masters, of principles of policy,—but the servants, instead of the rulers, of the loudest shouters of the hour; and with the less dignity from their being the professors of popular principles. Dangerous as it might be to see a Wellington and a Peel yielding to popular demands what they would never have originated, there might be, and there was, a certain dignity in it,—a touch of heroic mournfulness which is altogether absent in the other case,—when leaders professedly liberal do not originate measures, but have them extorted against their own convictions, by the clamor of their own preponderating party. As we shall see, there has been too much of this in a succeeding time, and some fearful consequences have probably to be met hereafter; but this is the place in which to fix the reproach where it is due,—to charge upon the anti-Catholic portion of the aristocracy the consequences, be they what they may, of first compelling concessions to popular intimidation, and turning back the government from its glorious post of guide and ruler of the will of the people, to the ignominy of being its reluctant follower and servant.

As for what remained to be done,—obviously, in the view of all the people,—the House of Commons must be reconstituted; municipal government must be purified; slavery must be abolished; something must be done to lighten the intolerable burden of the poor-law; the corn-laws, and, as a consequence, the game-laws, must be repealed; religious liberty must be made complete; the youth of the nation must be educated; and something remained over and above, and still remains,

—more important and more pressing, if all men could but see it, than all these put together: the industrious must have their deserts of food and comfort. The poor-law, the corn-law, taxation, and education,—these, if properly taken in hand, and amended to the utmost, might do something; but whatever they might leave over must be done. It cannot, in the nature of things, happen for ever, or for very long, that men in rural districts shall toil every day, and all day long, without obtaining food for themselves and their children; or that men in the towns should sit at the loom, or stand over the spindles, through all the working-hours of the day, for their whole lives, till age comes upon them, and then have no resource but the workhouse. The greatest work remaining to be done, was to discover where the fault lies, and to amend it while there was yet time. We shall hereafter see what has been done to this end, and must then draw our inferences as to what remains to be done.

In 1829 the weavers of Lancashire and Cheshire were earning, at best, from 4s. 4½d. to 6s. per week when at work. The most favored had to wait a week or two between one piece of work and the next; and about a fourth of the whole number were out of employ altogether. The parishes made allowances in the proportion necessary to enable these people to procure food and shelter; and the burden became so heavy, that a continually increasing number of rate-payers sank down into the condition of paupers. At this time, a cotton-mill was burned down at Chorley, in Lancashire; and there was reason to suspect that the fire was not accidental,—disputes having taken place between the proprietors and their men about wages. The factory was rebuilt, and persons were employed at the rate of wages formerly given. An advance was soon demanded, and refused. The spinners turned out; and they used every effort to prevent others from taking their places: but, where so many were in need, hands were sure to be found. Four of the new workers lodged in the house of one of the overseers.¹ At one o'clock in the morning (June 17, 1830), a tremendous explosion shook the house to its foundation, destroyed the furniture, and blew out all the doors and windows,—without, however, materially injuring any of the inmates. A common breakfast-can, containing gunpowder, had been let down the chimney, and ignited by a slow match. Here was one symptom of the state of society which could not long exist. Amidst fearful records of the destruction of property in the manufacturing districts by men wild with hunger, we meet with the yet more sickening stories of the Hibners and Philps, who hardly escaped from the hands of the mob for their treatment of parish apprentices. The name

State of
operatives.

¹ Annual Register, 1830, Chron. p. 92.

of Esther Hibner is familiarized to all ears by its infamy. The sum of her history is, that she treated her apprentices as the most barbarous and depraved of slaveholders treats his slaves, whom he would rather torture than make a profit of. She starved them; she beat them; she pulled out their hair; she had them ducked; till, happily, one died of the ill-usage, and the others were in consequence rescued. Esther Hibner was hanged. In this case, protection came when only one life had been sacrificed; but the succession of cases that was revealed at this time, and the general impression conveyed by the evidence, caused a conviction that the pauper apprentices were too many and too helpless to be properly cared for; and that there must be something intolerably wrong in the state of society which permitted them to swarm as they did. During the same period, a case here and there appeared at the police-offices, or came to the knowledge of inquiring men, which showed, that, if the amount of pauperism was becoming unmanageable, so were the abuses of pauper funds. The corruption of morals caused by the parish allowance for infants was more like the agency of demons than the consequence of a legislative mistake. In many rural districts, it was scarcely possible to meet with a young woman who was respectable; so tempting was the parish allowance for infants in a time of great pressure. And then again, there were the pauper marriages; old drunkards marrying the worst subjects they could find in the neighboring workhouses, for the sake of the fee of two or three pounds given to get rid of the woman. The poverty of the industrious, the violence of the exasperated, the cruelty of the oppressor, the corruption of the tempted, the swindling of the corrupt, and the waste of the means of life all round, to a point which threatened the stability of the whole of society,—these were things which could not long endure, and which made the thoughtful look anxiously for a change. The amount of poor-rate expenditure for relief at this time was between six and seven millions annually, and incessantly on the increase.

First among the changes needed was the introduction of an abundance of food. While, however, men, women, and children were actually wan and shrunk with hunger, they saw a sight which turned their patient sighs into angry curses. When the poor Irish lay hands on grain about to be exported, we do not wonder at the act, though we would fain make them understand that by the sale of that grain comes the fund which is their only resource for the payment of their labor, and their consequent means of bread, and hope of next year's crop. But, when the starving peasant sees whole breadths of wheat devoured or laid waste before his eyes by the hares and pheasants of his rich neighbor, what can be said that shall deter

Game laws.

him from putting in for his share? During this period, the jails were half filled with offenders against the game-laws; and besides the melancholy stories, so frequent as to weary the newspaper reader, of poaching affrays, in which men of the one party were killed by violence in the night, and men of the other party were afterwards killed by law, we find a new order of offences rising up under the vicious system. We find that men prowled about in the fields near the great game covers, strewing and sowing poisoned grain. Country gentlemen were not then so well aware, as later events have made some of them, of the danger of suggesting to the ignorant peasant the use of poison, in any kind of self-defence against his neighbor. But, if the evil had never spread beyond the poisoning of pheasants and hares, there was enough in it to induce any thoughtful and humane man to inquire whether he was not pursuing his sports at too great a cost. If he did not know, and would not learn, the amount of social injury that he was causing in the useless consumption or destruction of food, it was clear to all eyes, that he was causing his brother to offend by his persistence in the pursuit of a mere amusement. Some transactions of this time between the country gentlemen and their peasant neighbors remind us but too strongly of the days before the first French Revolution, when the great man of the chateau kept the neighboring cottagers up all night, whipping the ponds, to silence the frogs. Subsequent events showed that these cottagers were of opinion, that, as they were to toil for the great man in the day, he should have protected, instead of forbidding, their sleep at night; and events were now at hand which indicated something of the feeling of the ignorant and suffering peasantry against the landed interests of England.

It is during this period that we come upon the traces of the practice which is, beyond all others, the opprobrium of our time, — the practice of poisoning for the gratification of selfish passion. The perpetrators are of a different order from those of whom we read in the history of past centuries, — of whom we read with a shudder at the thought of living in such times; but the crime is as desperate in our day, and, it is to be feared, more extensive. Then, it was the holders of science and their intimates that did it, — those who ought best to have known the value of human life, and the irredeemable guilt of cruel treachery. In our day, it is the lowest of the low who do it; people whose ignorance and folly, offered in evidence on their trial, make us aghast to think how, when, and where we are living, with beings like these for fellow-citizens. We look upon these fellow-citizens of ours as upon ill-conditioned children, killing flies for their amusement, and breaking windows in their passion. They know nothing of the sacredness of human life, of

Poisonings.

virtue, decency, good fame, or of doing as they would be done by. They want something, — money, or a lover, or a house, or to be free of the trouble of an infant; and they put out the life which stands in the way of what they want. Time and experience appear to show that this is but the beginning. Their sluggish faculties seem to be pleasurably animated by the excitement of the act; and they repeat it, till, at the present time, we find cases of men and women who have been poisoning relations and neighbors by the score, during a period of ten or fifteen years. The guilt and the shame lie with the whole of society, which has permitted its members — hundreds of thousands of them — to grow up as if they were not human beings at all, but a cross between the brute and the devil. We can see the horror of the existence of such a class in another country, and shudder at the atrocious mental and moral condition of the *canaille* at the time of the first French Revolution; but it may be questioned whether France had at that time any thing to reveal more sickening than our wholesale child-murder for the sake of the profits from burial-clubs, and the poisonings which sweep off whole families in the hamlets of our rural districts. In the year 1828, the idea seems to have been so new and appalling as to make us feel, in the reading, ashamed of the familiarity which has grown up in ten years. In 1828, Jane Scott was found guilty, at the Lancaster assizes, of having murdered her mother by poison. She had been previously tried for the murder of her father; but had escaped, through the death of a witness. Before she was hanged, she confessed both murders, and also that she had poisoned an illegitimate child of her own, and one of her sister's. The object of her parricide was to obtain property, which might tempt an acquaintance to marry her. Her age was twenty-one. She seems to have acted under the superficial excitability of a child, rather than from any fury of passion. This first case of a long series is here given expressly as such. Henceforward a general mention must suffice; for the crime becomes more and more frequent. Next to the pain of the fact is that of hearing what is proposed as a remedy. Far and wide now, men are proposing to restrict and impede the sale of poisons, — as if any mechanical check could avail against a moral mischief so awful! It is not in barring out any knowledge once obtained that safety can be found, but in letting in more without restriction or delay. We have had warning of this for many years now; yet no system of national education is in practice, or likely to be so. Sectarian quarrels have come in the way. To this hour, men are disputing about the order of religious education that shall be given, and insisting upon the right to communicate exclusively each his own views; while one generation after another passes off into the outer

darkness, and beings, called human, are, after leading the life of devils, dying the death of brutes. Let this case of Jane Scott be preserved and perpetuated till we have done our duty by the living of her class, and then forgotten as soon as may be; for, in holding up to view her dangling corpse, we are gibbeting ourselves.

At the close of our last period, mention was made of the affrays caused by the practice of body-snatching. In the present period, we have a long array of such narratives, Burking. and something worse. It had been for some time suspected, that various ingenious methods were constantly in use to meet the demand of the hospitals for subjects for dissection. Among others, the detection of a single case of fraud in obtaining the body of a person unknown, dying in a workhouse, caused a suspicion that such frauds were frequent. A man and woman presented themselves to claim the body of a man who had dropped down dead on Walworth Common, declaring that the woman was the sister of the deceased. From their appearance of anxiety and grief, and the circumstantial story they told, no doubt of the relationship was entertained, till it was accidentally discovered that these people had sold the body to St. Bartholomew's Hospital for eleven guineas. The only way in which the culprits could then be reached was by prosecution for stealing the clothes of the deceased. It had become pretty evident now that the requirements of science must be met by some arrangement which should facilitate the procuring of bodies for dissection; and already individuals here and there were doing what they could by making known that they had by will left their own bodies for dissection. Some few had even sold their own bodies for that purpose, receiving at once a portion of the sixteen guineas, which was then the average price of such an article. But, in the year 1828, a disclosure was made, which, while it startled everybody, warned such negotiators as we have mentioned to be careful as to the parties with whom they made their bargain. By an accidental discovery of a dead body, recognized as that of a woman in good health a few hours before, in the house of a man named Burke, at Edinburgh, it was revealed that a system of murder had been going on for some time, in order to supply "subjects" to the dissecting-rooms. Burke himself confessed fifteen murders which he and his accomplice Hare had perpetrated together. Their practice was to note any helpless half-wit and unfriended persons in the streets, invite them home, make them first merry, and then stupidly drunk, and then suffocate them by covering the mouth and nose, and pressing upon the body. The medical men do not appear to have noticed any suspicious appearances about the corpses brought to them, or

to have made any troublesome objections to the stories told in each case to account for the possession of the body. The only observation on record is, that Dr. Knox, in one case, "approved of it as being so fresh." The horror of the medical men must have been extreme when the truth was revealed. The consternation of the public was excessive. Probably it was not known to any one, or ever will be, how far the practice of burking — as the offence was henceforth called — extended at that time; how much was true of the dreadful stories of murder current in every town and village in the kingdom. Most people believed at that time, that it was the custom of not a few gangs of murderers to clap plasters on the mouths of children and unsuspecting or helpless persons, to strangle them, and sell them to the doctors; and it is probable that the crime was suggested by the fear, and by the notoriety of the case of Burke and Hare; while the practical jokes instigated by the general apprehension were, no doubt, numerous. The crime was superseded by improved care on the part of surgeons, and by legislation, which supplied them with what they wanted. But the memory of the occasion is kept alive by the new term which it supplied. Since that date, we have had the verb "to burke;" which means to stifle or extinguish any subject or practice, from motives of self-interest. The execution of the murderer took place at Edinburgh in January, 1829, when the spectacle of popular rage and vindictive exultation was fearful.¹ Shouts arose from a multitude vast beyond precedent, — shouts to the executioner of, "Burke him; give him no rope; burke him!" And at every convulsive throe, a huzza was set up, as if every one present was near of kin to his victims. When the body was cut down, there was a cry for "one cheer more!" and a general and tremendous huzza closed the diabolical celebration.

This was not the only crime of this period which stimulated legislation. A shock was given to the general feeling by the execution of a man known and habited, though disowned, as a Quaker, for forgery. The case was so clear and so common, — a case of rash embezzlement, covered by the forgery of bills, in the hope of retrieval before the time came round, — that there could be no doubt about his punishment while others were so doomed; but the peculiarities of the case quickened the efforts of those who disapproved of capital punishment for forgery. Hunton was executed on the 8th of December; and, on the 27th of the same month, a case of embezzlement occurred which eclipsed all prior adventures of the kind.² A member of Parliament, Treasurer of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and a partner in

Notable
crimes.

¹ Annual Register, 1829, Chron. p. 19.

² Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 173.

the banking-house of Remington, Stephenson, & Co., absconded, in company with a clerk of the bank. Some suspicion was excited in the minds of the gentlemen who were his securities at the hospital, by the culprit, Mr. Rowland Stephenson, leaving home at four o'clock in a December morning; and they obtained from the president a check for 5000*l.* on the bank, whereby the balance at the bank might be lessened. The check was presented and paid at eleven o'clock; and at half-past one the bank stopped. The delinquents got off from the Welsh coast for Savannah.¹

A crime more remarkable than these, and unspeakably odious to public feeling, was that of the abduction of a young lady, an only child, by the conspiracy of a rapacious family. The Wakefields were the conspirators, and one of them was the principal in the case, — the husband as he hoped to be, and as he was, in the eye of the law, till a divorce could be obtained; a process which was quickly completed in a case where the universal sympathy was with the wronged parents, and their deceived and affectionate child. This young lady, aged only fifteen, was fetched away from school at Liverpool, on false pretences, and then made the victim of her attachment to her parents, by means of stories of their illness, pecuniary embarrassment, and so forth; so that she was carried to Gretna Green, and married there, and then conveyed abroad, where she was soon overtaken and rescued by her uncle. She went through the suffering of the prosecution of her enemy, and of the divorce process; married not long afterwards, and died early. The brothers Wakefield were imprisoned for three years, — Edward Gibbon Wakefield in Newgate, and his brother William in Lancaster Castle.²

A delinquent, who has ever since been a standing satire on the gullibility of English men and women, made his first appearance in public in May, 1830. Joseph Ady then wrote his first recorded letter, offering mysterious advantages on payment of a sovereign; and, the promised advantages not being apparent, he was brought before a magistrate on a charge of swindling.³ And he has never since left off swindling, in precisely the same manner, making, it is believed, a good living for many years, by the credulity of his correspondents. He baffled the ingenuity of every one who wished to stop his career, till the assistance of the Post-office authorities was called in. By making him responsible for the postage of his unaccepted letters, he has been checked at last, and laid up as a debtor to the Postmaster-general. But, in the intervening eighteen years, it may be safely alleged that no one per-

¹ Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 185.

² Annual Register, 1827, Chron. p. 326.

³ Annual Register, 1830, Chron. p. 73.

son in the kingdom has consumed so much time and patience of the magistrates in London, or, in his character of swindler, so tickled the fancy of the wide public,—a multitude of whom, all the while fully aware of his dealings with others, hesitated to forego the chance of some great advantage which might be purchased for one sovereign. Many are the young and old ladies; many the shopkeepers, with entries of bad debts, possibly recoverable, in their books; many the professional men, experienced in the odd turns of human life and fortunes,—who have held a letter of Joseph Ady's between the finger and thumb, waiting for some suggestion which would save them from shame and ridicule in the act of sending a sovereign to the noted Joseph. He is an old man now; but who will say that he is too old to find more dupes, if ever he escapes from the grasp of the Postmaster-general?

At four o'clock in the morning of Monday, the 2d of February, 1829, a man passed through the minster-yard at York, and saw a light in the building. Supposing that somebody was at work about a vault, he took no notice; and, indeed, the last thing likely to occur to any one was that York Minster could be on fire. Between six and seven, a boy, one of the choristers, passing the same way, set his foot on a piece of ice, and fell on his back, when, dusk as it was, he saw that smoke was coming out at various parts of the roof. He ran to the man who had the keys. On entering, it was found that the fine carved wood-work of the choir was all on fire.¹ That carving, done in the fourteenth century, with its curious devices, long become monumental, was evidently doomed. The preservation of any part now seemed to depend on the roof not catching fire; but the wood of the roof was extremely dry, and it presently kindled as a tongue of flame touched it here and there; and, at half-past eight, it fell in. The mourning multitude who looked on now told each other that their beautiful minster was gone. But such exertions were used that the flames were checked, less by the efforts of the people—though every thing possible was done—than by the failure of any combustible substance when the tower was reached. The great east window, the glory of the fabric, suffered but little; and the stone-screen which separated the communion-table from the Layde Chapel was capable of repair. The clustered pillars of the choir were ruined, being of magnesian limestone, and splitting into fragments under the action of the fire.

On inquiry, it was immediately ascertained that the mischief was done by an insane man, named Jonathan Martin, who believed himself directed by a divine voice to destroy the minster.

¹ Annual Register, 1829, Chron. p. 23.

He told his wife of his supposed commission; and she nearly diverted him from his purpose by asking what was to become of their child. The voice, however, urged him again: he travelled to York, secreted himself in the minster on the Sunday evening, struck a light at night with a razor, flint, and tinder, shouted "Glory to God!" till he was weary, and at three in the morning collected the cushions, set fire to them with a bundle of matches, broke a window, and let himself down to the ground outside by the knotted rope of the prayer-bell. Such was his own account; and several persons testified to having heard noises in the cathedral in the course of the night. How it was that no one of them took steps to ascertain the cause has never been explained. At the end of a month, the estimates for the restoration were prepared, and a meeting was held, the tone of which was so earnest and spirited as to leave no doubt that the work would be well and completely done. Happily, some drawings of the stalls and screen of the choir remained in the hands of the dean and chapter, which facilitated the imitation of the work destroyed; and it was resolved that the imitation should be as complete as possible. The poor lunatic was of course so confined as to be kept out of the way of further mischief. He had done enough for one lifetime.

On the 27th of April, there was a yet more serious alarm; for Westminster Abbey was on fire. A little after ten at night, flames were seen issuing from the north transept. Accidents : Westminster Abbey. As the news spread, it caused a pang in many hearts, — so strong seemed the probability that the fashion of burning cathedrals would spread, as the fashion of desperate crimes is wont to spread, among infirm brains. The anxiety of the moment was about the difficulty of getting at the place that was burning. The dean was out of town; but his function was well filled, and the mischief soon stopped. A cast-off screen, used in the Westminster plays, and put away here, with other lumber, in a corner, was on fire, and, falling, had kindled the boards. When an entrance was obtained, the flames were climbing rapidly to the roof; and it was considered certain that the delay of half an hour would have caused the destruction of the building.¹ There was for some time a good deal of mystery about the origin of the fire. The only thing clear at first was that it must have been done by somebody secreted among the lumber; but the finding of a mass of lead in a strange place, and traces of hobnailed shoes, were thought to show that thieves had come to steal lead from the roof, and that the fire was caused by them.

A fearful accident occurred during this period, which occasioned a useful amount of discussion, the coroner's jury sitting for six

¹ Annual Register, 1829, Chron. p. 80.

weeks. A new theatre — the Brunswick Theatre — had been recently erected in Wells Street, for the eastern part of London. The walls, twenty-two inches thick, supported a cast-iron roof. The architect thought this roof enough, though not too much, for the walls to support; and when he saw the proprietors adding one weight after another, — suspending the carpenters' shops, heavy scenes, &c., from the roof, — he gave repeated warnings of the danger of the experiment. The theatre was opened on Monday, the 25th of February; the audience little dreaming, as they left it, what a danger they had escaped. On the Friday following, the 29th, at the time of rehearsal, when many people were in the theatre, the walls gave way, and the iron roof came crashing down. Ten houses on the opposite side of the street were destroyed, and some passengers and a dray and horses crushed. Eleven persons within the theatre were immediately killed, and twenty were seriously hurt. The jury returned a verdict of strong censure against the proprietors, in which the architect was not implicated.

The most interesting class of casualties which happened during this period was that of Thames Tunnel accidents. Every man, woman, and child, who read newspapers, had some ideas and feelings about this great work. They knew that though many persons had thought of tunnels under rivers, none had been able to make them; and that, in this case, the credit of doing the thing was infinitely greater than that of conceiving of it. They had some idea of the great commercial importance of this work; but the predominant interest was from sympathy with the gallant engineer, Mr. Brunel. The tunnel itself was begun with the year 1826; and the first nine feet were easy, — the soil being stiff clay.¹ Through this substance, the celebrated shield of Mr. Brunel pushed its way, inch by inch, as the worm — from whose boring process he took the idea of his enterprise — works in its cylindrical shell, by hair-breadths, through the hardest wood.² Before the middle of February, the workmen came to a dangerous part, a tract of loose, watery sand; and, for thirty-two days, there was momentary danger of the river breaking in. On the 14th of March, they came to clay again; and they went on very happily, boring through it, till they had built 260 feet of their great cylinder. On the 14th of September occurred the first breach, when the river poured down upon the top of the shield. The engineer had foreseen the danger, and provided against it. A month after, the same thing happened again; and again his foresight had been equal to the occasion. With a few alarms, the work went on well till the following April, when the soil became so moist, that men were sent

¹ Edinburgh Encyclopedia, art. Tunnel.

² London, iii. pp. 56, 61.

down from a boat in a diving-bell, to see what was the matter. The men left behind them a shovel and hammer at the bottom of the river, and these tools were presently washed into the tunnel on the removal of a board,—showing how loose was the soil throughout the eighteen feet which lay between the top of the tunnel and the bottom of the river. In the middle of May, some vessels moored just above the tunnel-works, and this occasioned an unusual washing of the waters overhead. On the 18th occurred the first great irruption of the river. In it came, sweeping men and casks before it, glittering for a moment in the light of the gas-lamps, and then putting them out, and blowing up the lower staircase of the shaft. The workmen barely escaped; and one who was in the water was rescued by Mr. Brunel. The roll was instantly called, and not one was absent. The cavity above was closed with bags of clay; and, before August was out, the traces of the disaster were cleared away, and all were at work again as if nothing had happened. By the beginning of 1828, the middle of the river was reached; and, whatever had been the wear and tear of anxiety, vigilance, and apprehension, for two years, the engineer had thus far succeeded without the loss of a single life. On the 12th of the next August, a rush of water occurred which caused the death of six men. Mr. Brunel himself was hurt; and his life was saved only by the rush of water carrying him up the shaft. When the river-bottom was explored, by means of the diving-bell, the cavity was found to be so large that scarcely any one but Mr. Brunel would have thought of filling it up; but he undertook and achieved it,—four thousand tons of clay being required for the purpose. But the directors were discouraged; the funds were exhausted; the tunnel was shut up for seven years; and Mr. Brunel had to bear the long mortification of this suspense. He knew the substantial character of the work, as far as it had gone; and he never lost the hope of being permitted to finish it; and, meantime, he had the sympathy of a multitude of the English people in his toils, his sufferings, and his indomitable courage and perseverance. It was no uncommon thing, in those days, to overhear little boys telling their sisters the story of the enterprise, or arguing with each other as to whether it would ever be completed; and in the factories and farmsteads and public-houses of the land, the romance of the tunnel engaged a large share of true English pride and hopefulness.

Some other public works prospered better; and one great event in the commercial history of this period was the opening of St. Catharine's Dock. The privileges of the older docks were to die out between the years 1822 and 1827; and some of the principal merchants of London considered

it desirable at once to obviate a renewal of dock monopolies, and to provide for present and future expansion of commerce, by building a new dock. They procured their Bill in 1825; and proceeded to take down eight hundred houses, and St. Catharine's Hospital, founded in 1148, by Maude, spouse of King Stephen, — re-establishing this hospital and appurtenances in Regent's Park.¹ The first stone of the new dock was laid in May, 1825; and it was actually finished and opened in October, 1828, though the mere circuit-wall, lofty and secure, comprehends an area of twenty-three acres, and there is accommodation within for 120 ships, besides smaller craft, and for 110,000 tons of goods. The most noticeable circumstance in connection with St. Catharine's Dock is perhaps the new economy of time and convenience in loading and unloading vessels, from the use of scientific principles and methods discovered since the last erections of the kind. The capital employed exceeded 2,000,000*l*.

The markets of London were much improved during this period, — the Duke of Bedford building the handsome London
markets. edifice in Covent Garden, which occupies the place of the dirty, inconvenient, and unsightly buildings which formerly stood in the centre of the market area: Fleet Market being opened in November, 1829; and Hungerford Market begun in 1830.² Besides the convenience and advantage to health conferred by the markets themselves, they occasioned the opening of new streets, and the removal of many nuisances. The old Fleet Market became the present Farringdon Street; and Hungerford Street was rebuilt, on a new site, and with an increased width of ten feet. Elsewhere, the street improvements were very great; much space being cleared round St. Martin's Church, by which a close neighborhood was ventilated; and yet greater advantages gained by the removal of Exeter 'Change and the adjacent houses. Men's minds were by this time turned to the subject of street improvement — which means, primarily, health improvement — in London; and that course of action was beginning, which, with the help of railway facilities, will end only, we may hope, with the laying-open every court and alley where men live, to the passage of the air of heaven.

The health and pleasure of the Londoners were beginning to be considered in regard to the parks, as well as the Parks. streets. In 1827, St. James's Park, which was before as little beautiful as any piece of ground in such a place could well be made, was laid out anew, with such exquisite taste as makes it one of the finest walks in the world. In the same year, Hyde Park was much improved by drainage and planting. The Regent's Park was continually improving by the growth of its

¹ London, iii., pp. 74-76.

² Companion to the Almanac, 1830, p. 241.

plantations, and becoming as much a favorite of promenaders as any park in London. On its outskirts, too, there was now a great and increasing attraction. The Zoölogical Gardens, begun in 1825, were opened to visitors in the spring of 1828; and those who came to enjoy the wise and profitable pleasures of the place soon amounted to hundreds of thousands, so as to guarantee the self-support of the institution. The opening of the first Zoölogical Gardens in England deserves to be noted in any history of popular interests, — so great is the privilege of an airy walk among a vast variety of the creatures, winged and four-footed, which we may read of as peopling all the lands of the globe, but can here alone ever hope to see.

The King was during this period pleasing himself, but nobody else, with the erection of Buckingham Palace. What-
ever may be thought of his gentlemanly qualities in Buckingham
Palace. other ways, his subjects agreed, when they looked at the Brighton Pavilion and at his Pimlico Palace, that he had not good taste in building and architecture; for his edifices were neither healthful, convenient, nor beautiful. The cost of Buckingham Palace was enormous; partly from frequent changes of plan in the sovereign and his architect, which went to impair the beauty of the structure, as well as to increase the expense. The one alteration of raising the wings cost 50,000*l.*; and the whole affair little, if at all, less than 500,000*l.* Parliament did not permit this extravagance to pass unreviewed, — a committee of the House of Commons issuing a strong censure upon it in 1829. A nearly similar sum was voted by Parliament for the
preservation and improvement of Windsor Castle; and Windsor
Castle. no one was heard to object to this item of the national expenditure. The preservation of this old royal castle is truly a national duty; and the manner in which it was done was satisfactory and gratifying to the best judges.

The new Post-office bears inscribed on the frieze above the columns of the façade the date of the reign of George New Post-
office. IV., 1829. Yet it was set about in 1815, after the old situation in Lombard Street had been found unfit for the enlarged and increasing business of the establishment. It is amusing to read now, in the papers of the time, the accounts of the vastness of the new establishment, as transcending even the needs of the expanding postal communication of the day. If any one could have foreseen what was to happen to the postal communication of Great Britain within a few years, a somewhat different tone would have been used. But it is well that men should enjoy the spectacle of their own achievements for a while, before they become abashed by a knowledge of the greater things yet to be done. The new Post-office will always be considered

fine in aspect; and in 1829 it might fairly be called vast in its dimensions and arrangements, however much these may need enlargement to meet the wants of a later time.

During the same year, London University was advancing; the
London ground was clearing for the erection of King's College;
clubs. and the Athenæum Club-house was preparing for the reception of its members at the opening of the next year. The club had been in existence six years; and it was now so flourishing as to be able to build for itself the beautiful house which overlooks the area where the Regent's palace of Carlton House stood at the time of its origin. These modern clubs are a feature of the age worthy of note; for they differ essentially from the clubs so famous in the last two centuries. The two have no condition in common, except that of admission by ballot, or by consent of the rest, however expressed. Dr. Johnson's account of a club is, that it is "an assembly of good fellows, meeting under certain conditions;" but there is implied in this a degree of mutual acquaintanceship and fellowship which do not exist in the large modern clubs, where the object is not political or literary, or even social, but merely the personal convenience and enjoyment of the members, who use for this object the principle of the economy of association. The modern club is a mixture of the hotel, the home, and the reading-room. The member calls for what he pleases, and is waited on as at a hotel; he goes in and out, and lives in splendid apartments without daily charge, as at home, his subscription covering his expenses; and he sees newspapers and books, and meets acquaintances, as at the reading-room. Of the convenience of the arrangement, of the soundness of the principle of the economy of association, there can be no doubt; and it is on this account — because it may be hoped that the principle will be extended from these clubbists to classes which need the aid more pressingly — that the London clubs of this century form so important a feature of the time. There is some complaint that these luxurious abodes draw men from home, make them fond of a bachelor-life, and tend to discourage marriage, — already growing too infrequent among the upper classes of society, — and to lessen the intercourse between men and women of education; objections which will never be practically available against the clear daily convenience of such institutions. The remedy will be found, if it is found, not in unmaking these associations, but in extending them to a point which will obviate the objections. Already, the less opulent classes are stirring to prove the principle of the economy of association in clubs, where the object is, not bachelor luxury and ease, but comfort and intellectual advantage, in which wife and sister may share the general table, library, and lecture-room; where those whose daily busi-

ness lies far from home may enjoy mid-day comfort and evening improvement at a moderate expense, through the association of numbers. The city clerk, the shopman, the music and drawing master and mistress, the daily governess, married persons, and brothers and sisters, can now live out of town, can dine here, and see the newspapers, and stay for the evening lecture, while enjoying the benefit of an abode in the country, instead of a lodging in a close street in the city. When the experiment has been tried somewhat further, and found to succeed, it may be hoped that women will have courage to adopt the principle, and to obtain more comfort and advantage out of a slender income than a multitude of widows and single women do now. In a state of society like our own at present,—a transition state as regards the position of women,—the lot of the educated woman with narrow means is a particularly hard one. Formerly, every woman above the laboring class was supported by father, husband, or brother; and marriage was almost universal. In the future, possibly marriage may again become general; and, if not, women will assuredly have an independent position of self-maintenance, and more and more employments will be open to them, as their abilities and their needs may demand. At present, there is an intervening state, in which the condition of a multitude of women of the middle class is hard. Marriage is not now general, except among the poor. Of the great middle class it is computed that only half, or little more, marry before middle age. It is no longer true that every woman is supported by husband, father, or brother; a multitude of women have to support themselves; and only too many of them, their fathers and brothers too: but few departments of industry are yet opened to them, and those few are most inadequately paid. While this state of things endures,—which, however, cannot be for long,—there is a multitude of educated women in London, and the country-towns of England, living in isolation on means so small as to command scarcely the bare necessities of life. They are dispersed as boarders in schools and lodging-houses, able to obtain nothing more than mere food, shelter, and clothes; without society, without books, without the pleasures of art or science, while the gentlemen of the London clubs are living in luxury on the same expenditure, by means of the principle of economy of association. When such women have looked a little longer on the handsome exterior of these club-houses, and heard a little more of the luxury enjoyed within, it may be hoped that they will have courage to try an experiment of their own; clubbing together their small means,—their incomes, their books and music,—and make a home, where, without increased expenditure, they may command a good table, good apartments, a library, and the advantages and pleasures of society

It seems scarcely possible that the new club-principle of our time, already extending, should stop short of this, while so many are looking forward to a much wider application still. Those who think this a reasonable expectation will consider the opening of the Athenæum Club-house, with its 1000 members, and that of the United Service and other neighboring joint-stock mansions, a sign of the times worth noting.

Two large public buildings were rising at this time within a few miles of London, which have nothing in common but their date. There was a grand stand on Epsom race-course, of which nothing more need be said than what was said at the time, — that it was “on a more magnificent scale than the stand at Doncaster.”¹ What does the subject admit of more?

The other edifice was the metropolitan Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell, of whose destination so much might be said as to need a volume. We can merely note here, what a history of the time requires, — that the mode of life within those walls was almost as new as the edifice itself; and there were things to be seen there far nobler and more interesting than any architectural spectacle ever offered to the eyes of men.² The building-up that was to go on within was far grander than any that could be seen without, — the building-up of the overthrown faculties, the restoration of shattered affections. The Middlesex magistrates secured the services of Dr. and Mrs. (afterwards Sir William and Lady) Ellis as superintendents; and their method of management stands in noble contrast with that of former times, when the insane were subjected to no medicinal or moral treatment, but only to coercion. Instead of being chained, and left in idleness and misery, the patients here were immediately employed, and permitted all the liberty which their employment required. Not only might they be seen gardening with the necessary tools; but the men dug a canal, by which stores were brought up to the building at a great saving of expense. A score of insane men might be seen there, working with spade, pickaxe, and shovel; they built the wall; they kept the place in repair; they worked and lived much as other men would have done; and, from first to last, no accident happened. They attended chapel; and no interruption to the service ever occurred. The women earned in their work-rooms the means of buying an organ for the chapel-service. No sign of the times can be more worthy of notice than this, — that the insane had begun to be treated like other diseased persons, by medicine and regimen, and with the sympathy and care that their suffering state requires. As for the results, the recoveries were found to be out of all proportion more

¹ Annual Register, 1829, Chron. p. 17.

² Companion to the Almanac 1831, p. 220.

numerous than before, and continually increasing; the pecuniary saving of a household of working-people over that of a crowd of helpless beings raving in a state of coercion was very great; and of the difference in the comfort of each and all under the two systems, there can, of course, be no doubt. The Hanwell Asylum was not, even at first, the only one in which the humane and efficacious new method of treating insanity was practised; but, as the metropolitan asylum, built at this date, it was the most conspicuous, as were the merits of Dr. and Mrs. Ellis, from their having been many years engaged and successful in the noble task of their lives.

We find during this period much improvement going on in drainage and enclosure of land, and extension of water-works. The Ewbank drainage, by which 9000 acres

Drainage.

of land in Cardiganshire were reclaimed for cultivation, was completed in 1828, with its embankments, cuts, three miles of road, and stone bridge.¹ In a small insular territory, the addition of 9000 acres to its area of cultivation is not an insignificant circumstance. At the same date we find an achievement of somewhat the same kind notified in the records of the year, in those capital letters which indicate the last degree of astonishment. Chat Moss, lying in the line of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, was under treatment for the formation of the line; and, we are told, that "horses with loaded wagons, each weighing five tons, are constantly moving over those parts of the moss which originally would scarcely bear a person walking over it." The marvels of this first great English railway were opening upon the world by degrees. This solidifying of Chat

Railway.

Moss was enough at first. Next, we find that two locomotives were put to use on the works, to draw the marl and rock from the excavations, at a saving of nearly 50*l.* a month in one case, and more in the other. But the highest astonishment of all was experienced on occasion of the race of locomotives on the line, for a prize of 500*l.*, when "the Rocket actually accomplished one mile in one minute and twenty seconds; being at the rate of forty-five miles an hour."² If men had been told at even that late date at what speed our Queen would be travelling twenty years later, they would have been as truly amazed as our great-grandfathers could have been at the notion of travelling from London to Edinburgh in a day. It is very interesting to observe how strong was the exultation, twenty years ago, when any improvement in road-making turned up; how anxious men were to publish new facts about the best methods of skirting hills, managing differences of level, and connecting the substructure and

¹ Companion to the Almanac, 1830, p. 253.

² Companion to the Almanac, 1830, p. 251.

superstructure of the mail-roads, so as to facilitate to the utmost the passage of the mails. We find earnest declarations of the increase of postal correspondence, of the evils of delay, and of the benefits of rapid communication between distant places. These notices seem to us now clear indications of the approach of the railway age; but no one then knew it. What these complaints and declarations and desultory toils indicated, we can now recognize, but our fathers — except a philosopher here and there — could not then foresee. Nor shall we perhaps learn philosophy from the lesson, nor perceive that every urgent want, every object of restless popular search, foreshows a change by which the want will be met, and the search rewarded. As men were anxiously and restlessly mending their old roads up to the very time of the opening of the great first English railway, so may we be complaining and toiling about some inadequate arrangement which needs superseding, while on the verge of the disclosure of the supersession. It would save us much anxiety and some wrath, and render us reasonable in our discontents, if we could bear this in mind as often as we come into collision with social difficulties, whether they be mechanical or political; for social difficulties of both orders come under the same law of remedy.

In 1828, a committee of the professors of the University of Edinburgh were employed on a very interesting service, — witnessing how, by means of a special method of printing, the blind “were able to read with their fingers as quickly, or nearly so, as we could suppose them to do with their sight in ordinary circumstances.”¹ Since that time, the method of printing for the blind by raised letters, to be traced with the fingers, has been much extended; and embossed maps are largely brought into use, to teach them geography. The question of the existence of a faculty by which space could be apprehended and reasoned about, without any aid from the sense of sight, was proved by the case of Dr. Saunderson; and it is very interesting to watch its working in children who have never seen light, when they learn geography by means of these embossed maps. And the printing of books for their use has been facilitated from year to year, till now the number of books to which they have access is greatly increased, and their cost much diminished. The honor of the invention, in the form under notice, was assigned to Mr. Gall, by the committee of Edinburgh professors; and it is an honor greater than it is in the power of princes to bestow.

Before this time, the public had become aware of Sir W. Scott's claim to the undivided authorship of the *Waverley Novels*. In 1827, the copyrights of the novels, from

Reading for
the blind.

Scott's
novels.

¹ Edinburgh paper, April, 1828.

“Waverley” to “Quentin Durward,” with those of some of the poems, were sold by auction, and bid for as if the successive editions of these wondrous works had not already overspread the civilized world. After the unparalleled issue which had amazed the book-trade for so many years, the competition for the property was yet keen: the whole were purchased by Mr. Cadell for 8,500*l.*; and he made them produce upwards of 200,000*l.*¹ What would the novelists of a century before — what will the novelists of a century hence, if such an order of writers then exists — think of this fact? Genius of a high quality finds or makes its own time and place; but still the unbounded popularity of Scott as a novelist seems to indicate some peculiar fitness in the public mind for the pleasure of narrative fiction in his day. And it might be so; for his day lay between the period of excitement belonging to the war, and that later one of the vast expansion of the taste for physical science, under which the general middle-class public purchases five copies of an expensive work on geology for one of the most popular novels of the time. Certain evidences, scattered through later years, seem to show, that, while the study of physical science has spread widely and rapidly among both the middle and lower classes of our society, the taste for fiction has, in a great degree, gone down to the lower. Perhaps the novel-reading achieved by the middle classes during Scott’s career was enough for a whole century; and in sixty years hence the passion may revive. To those, however, who regard the changes occurring in the office and value of literature, this appears hardly probable. However that may be, the world will scarcely see again, in our time, a payment of above 8000*l.* for any amount of copyright of narrative fiction.

A great festival was held at Stratford-upon-Avon in April, 1827, on Shakspeare’s birthday, and the two following days,—from the 23d to the 25th inclusive.² There was Shakspeare festival. a procession of Shakspeare characters, music, a chanting of his epitaph at the church, banquets, rustic sports, and a masquerade, chiefly of Shakspeare characters. Such festivals — commemorating neither political nor warlike achievement, but something better than either — are good for a nation, and themselves worthy of commemoration in its history.

Some old favorites of the drama, or rather of the stage, went out during this period; and some new ones came in. Fawcett retired, after having amused and interested the crowd of his admirers for thirty-nine years; and Grimaldi, the unequalled clown, took his farewell in a prodigious last pantomime. There was something unusually pathetic in his

Actors.

¹ Annual Register, 1827, Chron. p. 200.

² Annual Register, 1827, Chron. p. 84.

retirement, however, sad as are always the farewells of favorite actors.¹ He was prematurely worn out. As he said that night, he was like vaulting ambition,—he had overleaped himself. He was not yet eight-and-forty; but he was sinking fast. “I now,” he said, “stand worse on my legs than I used to do on my head.” This was a melancholy close of the merriment of Grimaldi’s night and of his career. But there is seldom or never an absence of favorites in the play-going world. While, according to Lord Eldon, the sun of England was about to set for ever; while a Catholic demagogue was trying to force his way into Parliament, to the utter destruction of Church and State, and every thing else,—Lord Eldon² thus writes: “Amidst all our political difficulties and miseries, the generality of folks here direct their attention to nothing but meditations and controversies about the face and figure and voice of the new lady who is come over here to excite raptures and encores at the opera house,—namely, Mademoiselle Sontag. Hardly any other subject is touched upon in conversation, and all the attention due to Church and State is withdrawn from both, and bestowed on this same Mademoiselle Sontag. Her face is somewhat too square for a beauty, and this sad circumstance distresses the body of fashionables extremely.”

Mademoiselle Sontag did not stay very long; and her birdlike warblings were forgotten in the higher interest of the appearance of another Kemble the next year. The young Fanny Kemble, then only eighteen, came forward in October, 1829, under circumstances which secured to her beforehand the sympathy of the public, as her name insured for her a due appreciation of her great talents.³ She came forward to retrieve her father’s affairs, and those of Covent Garden Theatre; and her success was splendid. For two or three seasons, she was the rage. There were always those who, true to art, and loyal to Mrs. Siddons, saw that her niece’s extraordinary popularity could not last, unsustained as it was by the long study, experience, and discipline—to say nothing of the unrivalled genius—of Mrs. Siddons; but the appearance of the young actress was a high treat, though a temporary one, to the London public. She went to America, and married there; and subsequent appearances in England have not revived the enthusiasm which her first efforts excited.

The dramatic world is not more sure of a constant succession of enthusiasms than the religious. It is at this time, in 1828, that we first hear of that extraordinary man who was soon to turn so many heads; the greater number by a passing excite-

¹ Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 85.

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. 46.

³ Annual Register, 1829, Chron. p. 170.

ment, and not a few by actually crazing them. The way in which we first hear of the Rev. Edward Irving is characteristic. It was by the fall of a church in ^{Irving.} Kirkcaldy, from the overcrowding of the people to hear him.¹ The gallery fell, and brought down much ruin with it. Twenty-eight persons were killed on the spot, and one hundred and fifty more or less injured. Among the killed were three young daughters of a widowed mother, who never more lifted up her head, and was laid by their side in a few weeks. What Irving was as a sign of the times, we shall have occasion to see hereafter; for, for seven years from this date, and especially during the first half of that period, he was conspicuous in the public eye, and doing what he could, under a notion of duty, to intoxicate the national mind. What he had been, up to the first burst of his fame, we know through the testimony of one² who understood him well: "What the Scottish uncelebrated Irving was, they that have only seen the London celebrated—and distorted—one can never know. His was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with. I call him, on the whole, the best man I have ever, after trial enough, found in the world, or now hope to find. The first time I saw Irving was six and twenty years ago, in his native town, Annan. He was fresh from Edinburgh with college prizes, high character, and promise. He had come to see our schoolmaster, who had also been his. We heard of famed professors, of high matters classical, mathematical, a whole wonder-land of knowledge; nothing but joy, health, hopefulness without end, looked out from the blooming young man." It was in 1809 that he was this "blooming young man." The rest of the picture—what he was just before his death at the age of forty-two—we shall see but too soon.

These were times when some such man as Edward Irving was pretty sure to rise up; times certain to excite and to betray any such man who might exist within our borders. ^{Religious parties.} The religious world was in an extraordinary state of confusion, with regard both to opinion and conscience. The High-Church party was becoming more and more disgusted with the appeals of the day to the vulgar "Protestantism" of the mob, while it was no less alarmed at the concessions made to the popular will on both civil and ecclesiastical matters. The most earnest members of this party were already looking towards each other, and establishing that sort of union which was immediately to cast discredit on the hitherto honored name of Protestantism, and very soon to originate the "Tracts for the Times." This party had lost its trust in the Crown: it had no sympathy with Parliament, and

¹ Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 75.

² Carlyle's Miscellanies, iv. 81, 82.

saw that it must soon be in antagonism with it; and its only hope now was in making a vigorous effort to revive, purify, and appropriate to itself the Church. This exclusive reliance upon the Church appears to have been, as yet, the only new point of sympathy between this party and Rome; but it was enough to set men whispering imputations of Romanism against its members. While such imputations were arising and spreading, the Low-
Conversions of Catholics. Church party were zealous among the Romanists to convert them; and the registers of the time show their great success. Conversions from Popery figure largely among the incidents of the few years following Catholic emancipation; and nothing could be more natural. There were in the Catholic body, as there would be in any religious body so circumstanced, many men who did not know or care very much about matters of faith, or any precise definitions of them; who were of too high and honorable a spirit to desert their Church while it was in adversity; who had fought its battles while it was depressed, but were indifferent about being called by its name after it came into possession of its rights. Again, amidst the new intercourse now beginning between Catholics and Churchmen, it was natural that both parties, and especially the Catholics, should find more common ground existing than they had previously been aware of; and their sympathy might easily become a real fraternization. Again, there might naturally have been many Catholics constitutionally disposed to a more inward and "spiritual" religion than they received from a priest, who might add to the formalism of his Church an ignorance or hardness which would disqualify him for meeting the needs of such persons. Under these influences we cannot wonder that conversions from Popery were numerous at that time; but we may rather wonder what Lord Eldon, and other pious Protestants, thought of a fact so directly in opposition to all their anticipations. Protestantism had its day then, when its self-called champions least expected it; and Popery has had its day since, when the guardians of the Church, or those who considered themselves so, were least prepared for it. An extraordinary incident which occurred in the midst of these conversions was the defence set up by the counsel for the defendants in an action for libel, brought by the Archbishop of Tuam against the printer and publisher of a newspaper.¹ The libel complained of was an assertion, that the archbishop had offered a Catholic priest 1000*l.* in cash, and a living of 800*l.* a year, to become a Protestant. Sergeant Taddy declared the allegation to be purely honorable to the archbishop, instead of libellous, as, by a whole series of laws, he was authorized to bestow rewards on Catholics who should submit to conversion; and, under this head of his

¹ Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 69.

argument, he brought forward the atrocious old laws of Queen Anne and the first Georges, by which bribes to Protestantism, on the one hand, were set against penalties for Catholicism on the other. The defence was purely ironical; but the judge had to be serious. He pronounced these old laws irrelevant, being Irish; and, not stopping there, declared their intention to be, not to bribe, but to grant a provision afterwards to those "who, from an honest conviction of the errors of the Romish Church, had voluntarily embraced the purer doctrines of Protestantism."

The moderate Churchmen, meanwhile, were dissatisfied with the prospect opened by the conflicts of the High and Low Church parties; and some of them began to desire a revision and reconstitution of the whole establishment. Dr. Arnold¹ writes, "What might not —— do, if he would set himself to work in the House of Lords, not to patch up this hole or that, but to recast the whole corrupt system, which in many points stands just as it did in the worst times of Popery, only reading 'king' or 'aristocracy' in the place of 'Pope.'" Again, when disturbed by the moral signs of the times: "I think that the clergy as a body might do much, if they were steadily to observe the evils of the times, and preach fearlessly against them. I cannot understand what is the good of a national Church, if it be not to Christianize the nation, and introduce the principles of Christianity into men's social and civil relations, and expose the wickedness of that spirit which maintains the game-laws, and in agriculture and trade seems to think that there is no such sin as covetousness, and that, if a man is not dishonest, he has nothing to do but to make all the profit of his capital that he can."² Men were too busy looking after the faith of everybody else to attend to the moral evils of the times; and yet no party was satisfied with the Church, or any body of Churchmen of its own. This was exactly the juncture to excite and betray Edward Irving.

Amidst these diversities of faith, there never was a time when diversity of opinion was less tolerated. Amidst the vehement assertion of Protestantism, its famous right of private judgment was practically as much denied with impunity and applause, as it could have been under Popish ascendancy. The fact of the illegality of bequests for the encouragement of Popery was brought prominently before the public in 1828, by a claim of the Crown against the Bishop of Blois. The Bishop of Blois had put out a book, when resident in England at the beginning of the century, which he believed might serve the cause of religion permanently; and he invested a large sum of money, appointing trustees, who were to pay him the dividends during his life, and apply them after his death to

¹ Life of Arnold, i. p. 82.

² Life of Arnold, i. p. 274.

the propagation of his work.¹ It seems as if the bishop had discovered that his bequest was likely to be set aside as illegal, at the present time of eager controversy; for he petitioned in the Rolls Court, that his bequest might be declared illegal and void, and that the stock might be re-transferred to himself. But here the Crown interposed, demanding the stock in question, on the ground that the money, having been applied to a superstitious use, was forfeited to the Crown,—any proviso of the testator in prevention of such forfeiture being an evasion of the law. The Master of the Rolls, however, decreed justice to the bishop, giving him back his money, while deciding that he must not put it, in the way of bequest, to such “a superstitious use” as spreading a book in advocacy of the faith that he held. The whole transaction looks like one not belonging to our own century. The laws were ancient; but the use made of them by the Crown, on the plea of the contrariety of the book to the policy of the country, is disheartening to look back upon as an incident of our own time.

One small advance in religious liberty was, however, made in 1828, when the question was raised whether baptized Jews. Jews should be permitted to purchase the freedom of the city of London. In 1785, the Court of Aldermen had made a standing order that this privilege should not be granted to baptized Jews; and an application now, nearly half a century afterwards, by the brothers Saul, who had been always brought up in the Christian faith, though children of Jewish parents, was thought a good opportunity for one more struggle for religious liberty, after the failure of many in the intervening time. Much discussion having been gone through, the old-fashioned order was rescinded, and the petitioners were directed to be sworn in.²

Some extraordinary and painful scenes which took place during this period at the marriages of Protestant Dissenters' marriages. Dissenters foreshadowed the near approach of that relief to conscience which was given by the Dissenters' Marriage Bill. One wedding-party after another delivered protests to the officiating clergymen, and declared to persons present their dissent from the language of the service, and that it was under compulsion only that they uttered and received it. One clergyman after another was perplexed what to do; and there was no agreement among them what they should do. One refused to proceed, but was compelled to give way; and another took no notice. One rejected, and another received, a written protest. Some shortened the service as much as possible; and others inflicted every word with unusual emphasis. Such scandals could not be permitted to endure; and more and more persons saw that the Dis-

¹ Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 158.

² Annual Register, 1828, Chron. p. 27.

senters must be relieved and silenced by being made free to marry according to their consciences.

Two or three awkward questions arose at this time in our dependencies on questions of liberty, which were in each case decided in favor of the subject against the government.¹ The East-India Company were so rash as to attempt at the same time to coerce the press at Calcutta, and to Press at Calcutta. impose a stamp-duty of doubtful legality, when the period of the expiration of their charter was drawing on. The Council at Calcutta prohibited the publication of any newspaper or other periodical work by any person not licensed by the Governor and Council; and the licenses given were revocable at pleasure. Englishmen were not likely to submit to such restrictions on the liberty of printing, at any distance from home; and the men of Calcutta, after the regulation had been registered there, looked anxiously to see what would be done at Bombay. Two of the three judges of the Supreme Court of Bombay refused to register the regulation, as contrary to law; and the Calcutta authorities were therefore ignominiously defeated. And so they were, by the ordinary magistrates, about the same time, on another occasion of equal importance. The government wished to pay the expenses of the Burmese war by a new stamp-duty, which was pronounced by the whole population Stamp-duty. of Calcutta unjust and oppressive, and even illegal. All argument of counsel, all petition and remonstrance, being found unavailing, the inhabitants resolved to petition Parliament. They obtained permission from the sheriff, as usual, to meet for the purpose; but the sheriff was visited with a severe reprimand from the Council, and the meeting forbidden. The next step was to hold a meeting as an aggregate of individuals, instead of in any corporate capacity; and public notice of this intention was given. The Council, while professing to have "no objection" to the inhabitants petitioning Parliament, — a thing to which they had no more right to object than to the inhabitants getting their dinners, — sent an order to the stipendiary magistrates to prevent the meeting, and, if necessary, to disperse the assemblage by force. The magistrates consulted counsel, and, finding that each of them would be liable to an action for trespass for disturbing a lawful meeting, they declined acting; and the meeting took place. Here was foreshown some of the future under the new charter.

In 1827 we first hear of the new functionary, the protector of slaves, and of proceedings instituted by him.² An Protection of slaves. order in Council was promulgated in Demarara, in January, 1826, which had, after vehement disputes, been pre-

¹ Annual Register, 1827, pp. 194, 195.

² Edinburgh Review, xliii. p. 428.

viously promulgated in Trinidad,—by which, among other provisions, a protector of slaves was ordained to be appointed, who was to be cognizant of all proceedings against slaves, and against persons declared to have injured slaves; and to see that justice was done to the negroes. He was to assert and maintain the right of the slaves to marriage and to property, and to look to their claim to emancipation. In 1827 the first claim of a First self-pur- chased slave. slave to purchase liberty was made in Berbice; and the protector carried the cause. The opposition set up by the owner of the woman whose case was in question exhibited the vicious assurance which was an understood characteristic of West-India slaveholders. The plea—there, in that spot where marriage among slaves had been a thing unheard of, and where purity of morals was, naturally, equally unknown—was, that the money with which the slave desired to purchase her freedom had been obtained by immoral courses; the woman having had a mulatto child. The plea, odious from its hypocrisy, was rejected on a ground of law. The protector claimed for himself, as the legal officer concerned, the power of determining whether the money had been honestly earned. He had ascertained that it had been honestly earned. The result was, that the woman and her child were declared free on payment of a sum fixed by appraisers.¹ Thus, not only was a great inroad made on the despotism of slavery, but a prophecy was given forth to the whole world, that greater changes were impending. The wedge was in, and the split must widen. In the same year, Treaty with Brazil. a treaty for the abolition of the slave-trade was made with Brazil, the Emperor engaging that the traffic should cease in three years from the ratification of the treaty; after which the act of trading in slaves was to be considered as piracy.

A proceeding, big with prophecy of the fate of all remnants of Spring-guns. feudality, is noticeable in the Scotch High Court of Justiciary in 1827. A gamekeeper of Lord Home being indicted for murder for having set and charged a spring-gun, by which a man was shot dead, the counsel of the accused began his defence, by asserting the legality of the act of setting and charging a spring-gun. Certain English judges—Abbott, Bailey, and Best—had delivered an opinion, a few years before, that the act was lawful, and morally defensible. As the practice was abolished in this same year, 1827, we may spare ourselves the pain and shame of citing the arguments,—the prejudices under the name of opinions,—which English judges could bring themselves to deliver at so late a date as the nineteenth century. The men and their judgments are gibbeted in the pages of the

¹ Annual Register, 1827, p. 193.

"Edinburgh Review."¹ The Scotch judges now, after hearing full and fair argument, decided against the legality, as well as the morality, of the act; and declared the accused liable to prosecution for wilful murder. "The general doctrine of the law, even in England," their lordships agreed, "was, that it will not suffer, with impunity, any crime to be prevented by death; unless the same, if committed, could be punished with death."² Poaching would not be so punished. Spring-guns were secret, deadly, and, at the same time, dastardly engines. . . . It was an aggravation that they did in a secret, clandestine, and dastardly manner, what durst not be openly attempted." To ordinary persons, the case always seemed clear enough. The man who set a spring-gun either meant to shoot somebody, or he did not. If he did, he was guilty of murderous intent. If not, why set the gun at all? Much was said, in the days of spring-guns, and very properly, of the number of persons, not poachers, who were shot; of the constant danger to children, old people gathering sticks, or, as Sydney Smith has it, "some unhappy botanist or lover." But the one point of murderous intent, if any intent at all, is enough; enough to stamp our age with barbarism to the end of time. "If a man is not mad," says Sydney Smith,³ "he must be presumed to foresee common consequences: if he puts a bullet into a spring-gun, he must be supposed to foresee that it will kill any poacher who touches the wire; and to that consequence he must stand. We do not suppose all preservers of game to be so bloodily inclined, that they would prefer the death of a poacher to his staying away. Their object is to preserve game: they have no objection to preserve the lives of their fellow-creatures also, if both can exist at the same time; if not, the least worthy of God's creatures must fall,—the rustic without a soul; not the Christian partridge, not the immortal pheasant, not the rational woodcock, or the accountable hare." If it appears an idle task to be presenting matters so plain, even after it had long been decided that it was unlawful to kill a dog which is pursuing game in a manor,—Lord Ellenborough declaring that "to decide the contrary would outrage reason and sense,"—we can only say that we are presenting a picture of the times under our hand; times when such a remonstrance as this was needed in England. "There is a sort of horror in thinking of a whole land filled with lurking engines of death; machinations against human life under every green tree; traps and guns in every dusky dell and bosky bourn: the *feræ naturæ*—the lords of manors—eying their peasantry as so many butts and marks, and panting to hear the click of the trap and to see the flash of the gun. How any human

¹ Edinburgh Review, xxxv. pp. 126-130.

³ Works, i. p. 406.

² Annual Register, 1827, Chron. p. 117.

being, educated in liberal knowledge and Christian feeling, can doom to certain destruction a poor wretch tempted by the sight of animals that naturally appear to him to belong to one person as well as another, we are at a loss to conceive. We cannot imagine how he could live in the same village, and see the widow and orphans of the man whose blood he had shed for such a trifle. We consider a person who could do this to be deficient in the very elements of morals, — to want that sacred regard to human life which is one of the corner-stones of civil society. If he sacrifices the life of man for his mere pleasures, he would do so, if he dared, for the lowest and least of his passions. He may be defended, perhaps, by the abominable injustice of the game-laws, though we think and hope he is not. But there rests upon his head, and there is marked in his account, the deep and indelible sin of *blood-guiltiness*." This is the deep and indelible sin which is marked in the account of the nation, under the head of its game-defences, till, as before recorded, Lord Suffield obtained a parliamentary prohibition of man-traps and spring-guns, in the session of 1827.

As a winding-up of the improvements of this period, and in rank the very first, we must mention the systematic introduction of cheap literature, for the benefit of the working-classes. A series of two of cheap works had been issued before, chiefly of entertaining books meant for the middle classes; and there never was any deficiency of infamous half-penny trash, hawked about the streets, and sold in low shops. The time had now arrived for something very different from either of these kinds of literature to appear.

Immediately upon the establishment of mechanics' institutes, it was found that the deficiency of attainable books in science and literature was a serious misfortune. Men can learn little from lectures, unless they can follow up their subjects by reading; and hearty efforts were made to collect libraries, and form reading societies. These efforts convinced all concerned in them of two facts, — that books were dreadfully expensive, and that many that were eminently wanted did not exist; elementary treatises on scientific subjects, by which students might be introduced into the comprehension of a new subject by a more rational method than through a wilderness of technical terms. The friends of popular enlightenment began, upon this, to consider whether the want could not be supplied; whether works truly elementary could not be issued so cheaply as to meet the needs of the members of mechanics' institutes: and in April, 1825, Mr. Brougham Lord John Russell, Dr. Lushington, Mr. Crawford, William Allen, and others, formed themselves into a society, under the name of the "Society for Promoting the Diffusion of Useful

Society for
the Diffusion
of Useful
Knowledge.

Knowledge.”¹ Large subscriptions were offered, and all looked promising, when the commercial convulsions of the time stopped the progress of the work; and little more was done than in the way of preparation, till November, 1826, when Mr. Brougham assembled the friends of the enterprise, and the organization of the society was completed. The issue of works began on the 1st of March, 1827, in the form of pamphlets of unexampled cheapness; and the publication was continued fortnightly for a long period. The subscriptions declined when the society was once fairly in operation; and, after the first year, it was mainly supported by the sale of its works. The society was incorporated by a charter in 1832; and, before the virtual expiration of its efforts and powers, it had done great service to the existing generation, though not precisely—as happens with almost all social enterprises—to the extent, or in the mode, contemplated. The profession—and, no doubt, the intention—was to teach the elements of all the sciences, moral as well as natural; politics, jurisprudence, and universal history, as well as physical science. As Mr. Brougham said, in his “Treatise on Popular Education,” “Why should not political as well as all other works be published in a cheap form, and in numbers?” and he proceeded to assign good reasons why they should; but it was not done. In the laudatory and exulting notice of the operations of the society, some months after its works were spread over the kingdom, the “Edinburgh Review” slides in a hint: “We trust, however, that the appearance of the ethical and political treatises will not be unnecessarily delayed.” They never came; and the consequences to the society and to the public were very serious,—too serious to be passed over without grave mention. Some of the leading promoters of this society became the rulers of the country a short time afterwards. Those whom they had invited to be their readers were aware of their own lack of political and historical knowledge; and that this knowledge was, at that period of our history, of the highest importance to them. They desired it, and asked for it: it was promised to them, but not given. It was promised by men about to enter into office; and, when they were in office, it was not given. While a vast change was taking place in the constitution, and a multitude of men were eager to learn the history and bearings of this change, they were put off with treatises on dynamics and the polarization of light. Explanations of the fact might, perhaps, be easily given; but the fact was injurious to the spread of the knowledge which the society was willing to afford. The calm observers of the time presently saw, that the position of the Whig Ministry, after the passage of the Reform Bill, was seriously

¹ Edinburgh Review, xlv. p. 235.

affected by the popular persuasion, whether right or wrong, that the Whigs desired to preclude them from political knowledge. So much for what this important association failed to effect. It is very animating to observe and note what it achieved.

The actual distribution of tens of thousands of copies of works of a high quality is by no means the leading fact of this case, — great as it is. A more important one is the raising of the popular standard of requirement in literature and science. It is no small matter to have issued the "Penny Magazine" at the rate of nearly 200,000 copies per week; but it is a greater to have driven out of the market the vast amount of trash to which the "Penny Magazine" was preferred. The society's "Almanac" is a great boon; but a part of the good is, that it excluded the absurd old-world almanacs, and immediately caused an improvement in those issued by the Stationers' Company. Other cyclopedias and family libraries followed upon the different series issued by the society; and the Christian Knowledge Committee set up their "Saturday Magazine," after the model of the "Penny Magazine." There being, as provided by the charter, no division of profits in the society, the gains from their more popular works went to set up works of great value which could not possibly pay; such as their "Statistics of the British Empire." A reduction in the cost of maps generally followed the appearance of the society's Atlas. When to these great benefits we add the consideration of the value of the works published, — the "Penny Cyclopædia," the "Library of Entertaining Knowledge," the "Journal of Education," the "Gallery of Portraits," the geographical and astronomical maps, with many a series besides, — we shall see that the institution of this society was an important feature of its times, and one of the honors belonging to the reign of George IV. It did not succeed in all its professed objects; it did not give to the operative classes of Great Britain a library of the elements of all sciences; it omitted some of the most important of the sciences, and, with regard to some others, presented any thing rather than the elements. It did not fully penetrate the masses that most needed aid. But it established the principle and precedent of cheap publication, — cheapness including goodness; stimulated the demand for sound information, and the power and inclination to supply that demand; and marked a great era in the history of popular enlightenment. Bodies of men are never so wise and so good as their aggregate of individual wisdom and goodness pledges them to be; and this society disappointed the expectations of the public, and of their own friends, in many ways: but this was because the conception and its earliest aspirations were so noble as they were; and it is with the conception and original aspiration, that, in reviewing the

spirit of the period, we have to do. Any work suggested is sure to find doers, — one set, if not another: it is the suggestion that is all-important in the history of the time.

Within two years after the death of the Duke of York, happened that of his sister, the Queen of Würtemberg, the eldest daughter of George III. After she became the ^{Death of the} Queen of ^{Würtemberg.} second wife of the King of Würtemberg, she had little connection with England; and the tidings of her death were chiefly interesting as reminding men that one generation was passing away, and another coming. She died on the 6th of October, 1828, in her sixty-third year.

In January, 1830, a death happened in the political world, which occasioned extraordinary relief to all dull or indolent, or in any way incapable or unworthy, mem- ^{Mr. Tierney.} bers of the House of Commons. Mr. Tierney, the castigator, — the unremitting satirist of incapacity and unworthiness in any sort of functionary, — died suddenly on the 25th of that month. He had long been known to be suffering under an organic disease of the heart; and he was found, dead and cold, sitting in his chair in the attitude of sleep. The most notorious single event in the political life of Mr. Tierney was his duel with Mr. Pitt in 1798, the fault of which appears to have lain wholly with Mr. Pitt, who charged Mr. Tierney with “a wish to impede the service of the country,” and refused to retract, when time and opportunity were afforded. Both parties left the ground unharmed. Mr. Tierney was generally regarded as a sort of concentrated parliamentary opposition; but he was in office for short periods, at different times of his life: first, as Treasurer of the Navy, under Mr. Addington, in 1803; and last, as Master of the Mint, under Mr. Canning, in 1827. He represented many places in Parliament during his political life of forty-two years; and died member for Knaresborough.

It was in May of the same year, that Sir Robert Peel, the father of the Minister, died at the age of eighty. He ^{Sir R. Peel.} was originally a cotton manufacturer; and in that business he early obtained great wealth, which enabled him to become an extensive landed proprietor, a benefactor to the borough of Tamworth, where his influence soon transcended that of the Townshends, and a member of Parliament who discharged his function well. He was an able and conscientious public man, and blessed in his domestic relations, dying in the midst of a family of above fifty descendants. His politics were high Tory. He considered the national debt a national blessing, believed every thing to be right that was done by Mr. Pitt, and was unable so to perceive that the times were changing as to take any pleasure in the political acts of his son during the last two or three

years of his life. His life was interesting as an indication of the greatness of the career laid open to ability and industry, under favoring circumstances, in our country; and his death was interesting, not only as conferring title and increased wealth on his illustrious son, but as giving him that freedom of speculation and action which had necessarily been more or less restrained of late by virtuous filial regards.

Two great Indian officers, both Scotch by birth, died in 1828 — Sir David Baird and Sir Thomas Munro. Sir David Baird had been one of Tippoo Saib's prisoners, chained by the leg in a dungeon; after which he lived to receive the thanks of Parliament four times, — for his services in India in 1799; in Egypt in 1803; in the Danish expedition in 1807; and in the Peninsula in 1809, after the battle of Corunna, at which time he was made a baronet. He had been Governor of Fort George two years when he died, on the 18th of August, 1829. Sir Thomas Munro was Governor of Madras at the time of his death, which happened by a sudden attack of cholera in July, 1828. Having spent his life in Indian service, he was anxious to return to England in 1823, but was entreated by the directors to remain. He received his baronetcy in 1825. Capable in every way as he had shown himself to be as a soldier, his most eminent services were wrought in a nobler field, — in settling, governing, and fostering one conquered province after another that was put under his charge. His just and humane government was his highest title to honor.

Two African explorers died within this period, — Mr. Salt, on the 30th of October, 1828; and Major Laing, at some time not perfectly known, but supposed to be during the autumn of 1826. Major, then Lieutenant Laing, having been sent with his regiment to Sierra Leone, experienced the passion for African exploration, which has proved fatal to so many brave adventurers in all times; and, after various expeditions on political business to tribes residing not far from the western coasts, he was made happy by an appointment to proceed, *viâ* Tripoli, to Timbuctoo, in order to ascertain the course of the Niger. By that time the discoveries of Denham and Clapperton had roused much expectation and ambition, which it was Major Laing's hope to gratify. On the 14th of July, 1825, he married the daughter of the British Consul at Tripoli, and two days after set forth on the expedition from which he never returned. There is a good deal of mystery about his fate. On the 21st of September, he wrote from Timbuctoo the last letter ever received from him; and in this letter, which conveys an impression of discomfort and danger, he declares his intention of leaving the great

town the next morning. He was well satisfied with his own views about the course of the Niger, and declared himself laden with information, from "records" which were "abundant" at Timbuctoo. Of all this he promised to write from Sego, in two or three weeks; but nothing more was heard of him but from some Arabs, whose testimony could not be relied on. All agreed that he was killed, and that his property was stolen; but where, in that fearful desert, his bones are whitening, and what was done with his effects, no real knowledge has ever been obtained. Mr. Salt was the companion of Lord Valentia in his Eastern travels; and he published his drawings, by which Lord Valentia's work is illustrated in a valuable manner. His familiarity with Oriental customs and languages caused him to be selected by the government for a mission to Abyssinia, to carry presents to the Emperor, and afterwards to be our Consul-general in Egypt. He died at a village between Cairo and Alexandria, after having added much to our knowledge of Eastern countries. He was a native of Lichfield, and received his education at the grammar-school of that city.

Among the promoters of the useful arts who died during this period, we find one strange humorist, — Dr. Kitchener, Dr. Kitchener. whose name was supposed to be an assumed one by a multitude who had read his cookery-books, without being aware that he had written upon optics and music before he committed himself to gastronomic science. We say, "read his cookery-books," because it is impossible not to read them, if one looks at them at all, so full are they of sense and appropriate learning, and of sly fun. Dr. Kitchener was educated at Eton and Glasgow, was nominally a physician, but did not trouble himself about practice, as he had an independent fortune and bad health. He suffered under complicated disease for many years before his death, which happened when he was fifty years of age, suddenly, from a spasmodic affection of the heart. It was his state of disease, and not epicurism, which made him so refined a teacher of the laws of luxury. The laws of luxury were, in his opinion, involved in those of health; and he taught both together, to the great advantage of a multitude of readers, numerous beyond computation. He amused himself with experiments in cookery, and was to the last degree exact about the preparation of his food; but with him this was an intellectual pursuit, followed up with an aim, — his own habits being regular, and even abstemious, except on occasion when an attack of peculiar disease caused a craving for an enormous quantity, according to his own account, of animal food. His chief delight was in music, and he was a student of natural philosophy. As he is probably the only man who will ever give us the overflowings of a scientific and gen-

tlemanly mind, in the form of witty cookery-books, he should find a place in the records of his time. He died in February, 1827.

In the next year died the man to whom chiefly our country owes the introduction of the muslin manufacture,—
Samuel Oldknow. Mr. Samuel Oldknow, who reached his seventy-second year. When quite a young man, he tried the experiment of manufacturing muslin handkerchiefs at Anderton, near Bolton, in Lancashire. In a few years, he established a great manufactory at Stockport; and afterwards at Mellor, in Derbyshire. The results were, that, as regarded himself, he grew rich, and became a great landed proprietor and agriculturist,—being President of the Derby Agricultural Society at the time of his death; and, as regards the public, that the manufacture is now brought to such a point of perfection that we can bring cotton from India, make it into muslins rivalling those of India themselves, and sell them in India at a lower price than the native fabric can be sold for on the spot. Mr. Oldknow had the energy and perseverance which invariably distinguish public benefactors of his order. He seldom saw a muslin dress in any drawing-room, of a pattern that was new to him, but he had the pattern, with improvements, in the loom the next day. It was a great benefit and blessing to his mind, that he could interest himself in agricultural pursuits. The penalty which improves in the useful arts usually have to pay for their privilege is, that they cannot rid themselves of their object; as an eminent ribbon-designer was heard to say, that it was the plague of his life that he saw ribbons everywhere,—ribbons in the winter fire, ribbons in the summer evening clouds, and wherever there was form and color. Mr. Oldknow must have dropped his muslins when in his farm-yard, and among his crops.

The great printer, Luke Hansard, died in 1828, at the age of seventy-six. His father, a Norwich manufacturer, Luke Hansard. had died early in embarrassed circumstances. At the end of his apprenticeship to the printing business, Luke Hansard went to London, with one guinea in his pocket. The very next time that he had a guinea in his pocket, he sent it to Norwich to pay a debt of his father's,—his father having then been dead some years. Mr. Hughs, of Great Turnstile, was then, in 1774, printer to the House of Commons; and Luke Hansard became a compositor in his office. In two years he was made a partner; and, from that time, his career, as sketched in the report of a committee of the House of Commons on parliamentary printing (1828), was nothing short of illustrious. He improved the extent and quality of the parliamentary printing beyond what had been dreamed of. Employed by Mr. Orme in printing his

"History of India," he informed himself so thoroughly on Indian subjects, that he was Burke's right hand in selecting evidence from India documents for the trial of Warren Hastings. It was he who supplied, without delay, and without the commission of an error, the unequalled demand for Burke's "Essay on the French Revolution." Dr. Johnson secured him for his printer; and Porson pronounced him the most accurate of Greek printers. When Mr. Pitt was perplexed how to get the report of the secret committee on the French Revolution printed, under such impossible conditions as his own illegible handwriting, extreme haste, and absolute secrecy, Luke Hansard promised that the thing should be done; and the Minister was amazed by the sight of the proof-sheets early the next morning. After the union with Ireland, the Parliamentary printing increased so much that Mr. Hansard declined all private business except during the parliamentary recess, when he liked to have it, to keep his great corps together and in practice. His great corps once thought they had him and his affairs in their own hands. In no business could a strike of workmen be more fatal than in this; and in 1805, when strikes were the fashion, Hansard's men thought themselves sure of any wages they chose to ask. But they did not yet know their employer. The greater the danger, the better prepared was such a man to meet it. He had foreseen the event, and had devised plans, and taught them to his sons, by which the art of printing might, by extreme subdivision of employment, be practised by untrained hands. He let his workmen go; picked up great numbers of unemployed men from the streets and stable-yards, put on a working-jacket, and, with his sons, went from one to another, showing how the business was to be done, and aiding in it. He was an early riser; and his plans, so original, so various, and so singularly successful, were made in the clearness and coolness of the morning, before those were awake who were to execute his schemes. He was little seen out of the range of his business; and that business was of so wide a range as to afford constant exercise to all the faculties of his mind. It united the interests of the scholar, the literary man, and the politician, with those of the vast mechanism of his business. He had the excellent health which is the natural privilege of men who work the whole of the brain equably and diligently,—the faculties which relate to the body, the intellect, and the affections. Up to the age of seventy-five, he felt no change in his powers; nor was any failure apparent to his friends. At that time he experienced paralysis of the left eye. It disappeared; but, when the business of the session began, he declared his conviction that this would be his last season of regular work, but that he would work on while Parliament sat. And so he did; and he had the

gratification of printing the report on printing, in which his labors are immortalized. When this was done, and Parliament rose, he felt himself sinking, and summoned to his presence the principal persons in his establishment, taking a solemn leave of them, and declaring his belief that he should see them no more. We cannot but hope that some of them knew how he came to London, and what he did with his first spare guinea. He died a few weeks after this leave-taking, saying farewell to each member of his family individually, explaining what provision he had made for them, and offering to each his blessing and a parting gift. Such was the life of Luke Hansard, which speaks for itself. The particulars given will not be too many for those who, hearing the name of Hansard incessantly, may not be aware how it came to be connected with the printed debates of the Lords and Commons of England.

Just at the time when George III. came to the throne, a youth belonging to Bath was apprenticed to a jeweller there, Philip Rundell. — a youth of high spirit, little industry, a strong love of pleasure, good talents, and especially a remarkably refined taste, which contrived to show itself before he knew any thing of art. When this gay lad heard of the accession of the young King, and of the splendors of the coronation, he little dreamed how much he should hereafter have to do with this King and all his family; nor how it would be his own industry that would make a way for him into the royal presence and employment. This somewhat harum-scarum youth — apt to go into a violent passion, apt to sing and dance rather than to work — was Philip Rundell, who was to die one of the richest and best-known men in England. A new apprentice came into the business at Bath, a few months before he left it, to be trained to take his place; and the new apprentice's name was Bridge. Here we have the Rundell and Bridge whose firm is known all over Europe. Never were two men more unlike than Mr. Rundell and Mr. Bridge; yet the partnership turned out admirably, by their undertaking different departments. Mr. Rundell studied art, *con amore*, became an unequalled judge of diamonds, and worked indefatigably, — absolutely revelling in the gratification afforded by his business to his intellect and taste, when once it had expanded to a point which satisfied his desires. He was very irascible; but his people knew him, and revered his generosity, through his bursts of temper. No one ever left his employment on account of his temper. But he was not the man to go about for orders among the great, — always excepting the royal family. Mr. Bridge, amiable, gentlemanly, and as able in his way as his partner, undertook this part of his business. And he sacrificed no independence by it. On matters of taste

in their department, Messrs. Rundell and Bridge were called on to advise, and not to be dictated to. If it is asked how they reached this point of eminence, the only answer is, that they won it. Mr. Rundell was placed by his relations as a partner in the ancient jewellery establishment of the Golden Salmon, on Ludgate Hill; and there, if he had been an ordinary man, he might merely have made a competence, as an ordinary jeweller, in a respectable house. When the senior partner retired, leaving his money in the concern, Mr. Rundell invited Mr. Bridge to be his partner. In liberality of views the partners were one. They studied, and they largely bought, pictures, statues, gems, — every species of antique beauty that they could obtain access to; and that they obtained access to so many as they did, in those days of continental warfare, is a proof of their zeal in the pursuit of peaceful art. It was for the sake of art that they executed their celebrated “Shield of Achilles.” It was not ordered: it was not likely ever to be bought. But they communicated their idea to Mr. Flaxman, and paid him 620*l.* for his model and drawing of the shield. George IV. and the Duke of York, and two noblemen, had each a cast of this shield in silver gilt; and the jewellers now stood before the world as artists; and they gathered into their establishment all the talent, foreign as well as native, which promised to advance their art. It was about 1797 that they became diamond-jewellers to the royal family, on the retirement of their predecessor; and Mr. Rundell retired from business in 1823, — so that his intercourse with royalty extended over twenty-six years; and a long time that was to be handling and taking care of many of the finest jewels in the world. He was in the habit of giving away money freely. To persons out of the line of relationship, he gave sums not exceeding 200*l.*; and he is supposed to have given away about 10,000*l.* in this manner. To his relations he presented gifts varying from 500*l.* to 20,000*l.*; and in this way he distributed about 145,000*l.* during his life. Besides this, he settled annuities on a considerable number of persons, that he might not keep them waiting till his death; and at last he left property far exceeding a million. It was not the money that it brought, nor yet the fame, which made his success in life precious to him. It was the high gratification of his faculties and taste. And he enjoyed this long; for he had worked well during the last two-thirds of his life. His mind remained clear to the last; and he was eighty when he died, on the 17th of February, 1827.

His life carries us over from the department of the useful arts to that of art, properly so called. But first we must ^{George Dodd.} note the melancholy case of the engineer to whom we owe the design for Waterloo Bridge, and the institution of

steam passage from London to Margate and to Richmond. Mr. George Dodd was the son of Mr. Ralph Dodd, who effected some excellent engineering in his day. His unhappy son, in his best years, revived the idea of the Strand Bridge; and, on its being seriously undertaken, was appointed resident engineer, with a salary of 1000*l.* a year. This situation he hastily resigned; but he received 5,000*l.* in all from the company. His habits, however, put prosperity out of the question, great as were his talents. Those whom he had served could not save him from himself; and he lived to be brought up to the Mansion House as a drunken pauper. He asked for a week in prison, after which he would begin life afresh. He was taken care of in the infirmary of the prison; but he rejected medicine and advice, and sank at the end of the week, killed by intemperance, at the age of only forty-four. He died in September, 1827.

In the preceding March died a patient artist who had devoted thirty years of incessant labor to engraving the cartoons of Raphael. Thomas Holloway was scarcely heard of as an engraver till a book came out which presently became the rage,—Dr. Hunter's translation of "Lavater," for which Holloway had engraved seven hundred plates. He was made historical engraver to the King; and, when he was about fifty, applied himself to the great work of the cartoons, six of which were nearly completed, and the seventh begun, when he died in the eightieth year of his age. What a succession is here of men engaged in virtuous and intellectual toil, who lived in health, and died in a clear and serene old age!

Many people have seen the bust of Nelson which is placed in the Common Council-room at Guildhall; and the bust of Sir Joseph Banks at the British Museum; and the colossal heads of Thames and Isis on Henley Bridge; and some know the statue of George III. at the Register Office at Edinburgh. These are all works of the Hon. Mrs. Damer, whose father was the General Conway (afterwards Field-marshal) to whom the largest share of Horace Walpole's correspondence was addressed. To this lady Horace Walpole left Strawberry Hill, with 2,000*l.* to keep it in repair, on condition that she lived there, and did not dispose of it to any one but his great niece, Lady Waldegrave. Mrs. Damer's marriage was unhappy; and her husband destroyed himself nine years after their union. She had no children; and, from the time of her husband's death, she applied herself to the study and practice of art. She went to Rome for improvement, and returned to be the acknowledged head of amateur sculpture in Europe. She was always at work; and her work is in many great houses, valued as her gift, as well as for real merit. One of her last achievements was a bust of

Nelson, which she sculptured for the King of Tanjore, at the request of her relative, Sir Alexander Johnston, then Governor of Ceylon. Great was the sensation excited when the bust reached its destination; and its reception by the gazing multitude was such as to encourage further attempts to foster the artistic faculties of the natives of our dependencies. Mrs. Damer directed that her apron and tools should be buried with her. Let us hope that her example does not lie buried with them. She was in her eightieth year, and died on the 28th of May, 1828.

Another amateur-artist, better known as a patron of art, who died during this period, was Sir George Howland Beaumont, the friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom Sir Joshua left his picture, by Sebastian Bourdon, of the "Return of the Ark." This picture Sir George Beaumont presented, with fifteen others, to the National Gallery, a short time before his death. He was in Parliament for one session; but his heart was in private life,—in his home, his painting, and his friends. He was a liberal and judicious patron of art and artists; and the idea we form of him from Wordsworth's Works, the "Life of Wilkie," and other pictures of the time, is genial and endearing. He was one of those whose pursuits and tenor of life promise and deserve old age. He was seventy-three when he died, and then his death was from an attack of erysipelas. The event happened on the 7th of February, 1827.

George Dawe, the painter, died in 1829. The latter part of his life was spent on the continent; and most of his works were done there, as he was first painter to the Emperor of Russia. He was a Royal Academician; and a picture of his, "The Demoniac," hangs in the council-room of the Academy. He realized a very large fortune at St. Petersburg, but died in England, and was buried at St. Paul's. The Russian Ambassador and Sir Thomas Lawrence led the pallbearers.

Only three months afterwards, Sir Thomas Lawrence was himself carried to burial in St. Paul's, with as much pomp as rank and wealth can contribute to the honor of genius. Great as Sir Thomas Lawrence was, the abiding impression of him is, and will be, that he was not all that nature intended him to be. His early promise was most marvellous. At six years old, he took crayon likenesses; those of Lord and Lady Kenyon still existing to show the wonderful spirit the child could put into his drawings, which were also strong likenesses. At the age of eight, he saw a Rubens,—the first good picture he had ever seen. He could not leave it; and, when he was fetched away, he sighed, "Ah! I shall never be able to paint like that." At ten he painted historical pictures; and one especially—"Christ

reproving Peter" — manifested such promise as makes it a matter of infinite regret that he spent his life in painting portraits, even though that life establishes a new era in portrait-painting in England. At thirteen he received from the Society of Arts, for his copy of the "Transfiguration," the great silver-gilt palette, and a premium of five guineas; and yet at sixteen he was very near going upon the stage. There was something to be said for this fancy. He was full of personal beauty, grace, activity, and accomplishments; a hearty lover of Shakspeare, and a wonderfully fine dramatic reader. He was also very intimate with the Kembles. Indeed, he was early engaged to a daughter of Mrs. Siddons; but the father doubted the prudence of the connection, and the young lady afterwards died. Thus far Lawrence had studied under Mr. Hoare at Bath, an artist of exquisite taste, who fostered the boy's powers. At seventeen, Lawrence's father took him to London, and petitioned for an interview with Sir Joshua Reynolds. Sir Joshua was manifestly struck on the instant with the extraordinary beauty and manners of the youth, and gave close attention, during a long silence, to the young artist's first attempt in oils, — a picture of "Christ bearing the Cross." It was an anxious pause for both father and son; and the son at least thought that all was over, and that he should never be a painter, when Sir Joshua found fault with his coloring in many particulars. It was Sir Joshua's way, however, to get all the fault-finding done first, and then to praise; and this was what he was doing now. When he had raised the lad's spirits again, he said impressively, but mildly, "It is very clear you have been copying the old masters; but my advice to you is to study *nature*. Apply your talents to nature, and don't *copy* paintings." Then followed an invitation to call whenever he liked; and the great man's kindness never failed during the four years that he continued to live. Lawrence succeeded him in his office of principal painter in ordinary to the King. Honors were showered upon him from this time, and wealth flowed in, to be immediately dispersed in acts of generosity, or by habits of carelessness. He never married: he made money at an unequalled rate; yet he was never rich. Of course, it was said that he gamed; but this was so far from being true, that he conscientiously abstained from billiards, — at which he had never played for money, — because his fine play occasioned immoderate betting; and he thought it as wrong to occasion gambling in others as to game himself. At Christmas, 1829, he consulted a friend about insuring his life for 5,000*l.*, and resolved to effect the insurance on the 8th of January; but on the 7th he was dead. Between 1792 and 1818, he was painting the portraits of half the aristocracy of England; and then he was called to paint the royalty of Europe. The Regent

sent him to the Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle to paint the potentates there assembled; and he proceeded afterwards to various courts to complete his commission. He had never been abroad before, — had never seen Rome, nor even the pictures that Paris had to show. Before his return, he was elected, on the death of West, President of the Royal Academy. After his return, he went on portrait-painting to the time of his death. His service to art was in idealizing portraits. He had that *bonhomme* of genius which showed to him at once not only the best side of whatever human phenomenon met his eye, but all that a face and figure were capable of being under the best influences; and that ideal he had power to present. His portraits of children are beautiful beyond parallel. His own face and manner were most attractive to children. They would hang upon his neck, and sit on his knee to be fed; and their antics in his painting-room were as free as in the fields; and not a trait of frolic or grace ever escaped him. We have a myriad such traits, caught at a glance, and fixed down for ever. At Christmas, 1829, as we have seen, Sir Thomas Lawrence believed himself, as he then said, likely to attain a good old age. He declared his health to be perfect, except that at night his head and eyes were heated, so that he was glad to bathe them. On Saturday, January 2d, he dined, with Wilkie and others, at Mr. Peel's. On Tuesday, though not feeling very well, he was busy at the new Athenæum Club-house, about whose interior decoration he was much interested. On Wednesday, the 6th, he wrote a note to his sister, to say that he could not dine with her on Thursday, but would come on Friday; the day he meant to insure his life. On Thursday evening, being better than for some days before, he received two friends, with whom he conversed very cheerfully. Before they had left the house, they heard a cry from his servant, which made them return to the room, where they found him dead in his chair. He had told his servant that he was very ill, — that he must be dying. His disease was ascertained to be extensive ossification of the heart. He was sixty years of age.

One of Lawrence's famous portraits was of Miss Farren, the bewitching actress, of whom our grandfathers could not speak without enthusiasm. This lady, become Countess of Derby, died in April, 1829. Among her captives, she reckoned Charles James Fox, who spent evening after evening behind the scenes at Drury Lane; but there was no coquetry on the lady's part. She became the second wife of the Earl of Derby in 1797; was received at court; and, to the end of her days, was considered the most accomplished lady in the peerage. It may be a question whether, under the happiest domestic circumstances, it is wise to exchange the excitement of artistic life

for the level dulness of aristocratic existence; but Miss Farren's case is a proof that it may be done without scandal, or open bad consequences; and all will agree, that, supposing an opening to aristocratic life to be a good thing, artistic genius is a nobler avenue than the commoner one of wealth.

Before this time, and for some years afterwards, there was a good deal of disputation going forward as to the best method of learning a foreign language; whether in the old plodding way by grammar and dictionary, or by the new method of Mr. Hamilton, — by interlinear translations, in which each foreign word was placed above or below the equivalent English one. The dispute at times ran high, the advocates of each method not seeing that both may be good in their way. If people found that they could, by Mr. Hamilton's means, learn to read a foreign language more speedily and easily than by beginning with the grammar, they would certainly become Hamiltonians, whatever their opponents had to say to the contrary; and, if parents wished to give their children a thorough grammatical knowledge of a foreign language, they would put the grammar and dictionary before them as of old. A great number, too, would use both methods at once, — the ancient for a knowledge of the construction; the modern for a knowledge of the idiom, and of its affinity with their mother-tongue. In the midst of the controversy, and of great success, Mr. James Hamilton, author of the Hamiltonian system, died, at the age of fifty-nine, in September, 1829.

Of men of letters there died, during this period, William Gifford; Professor Jardine; Mitford, the historian; and Professor Dugald Stewart. Gifford's career was a remarkable one. He worked his way upwards from the lowest condition of fortune and education; his spirit and his love of knowledge being indomitable. He became known, when cabin-boy of a ship, to a surgeon of Ashburton, Mr. Cookesley, who so exerted his interest and his own generosity as to send the aspiring boy to Oxford. Earl Grosvenor afterwards took him into his house, to be tutor to his son. He was intimate with Canning, and became the editor of the "Anti-Jacobin;" and afterwards, for a long course of years, of the "Quarterly Review," which he edited from its origin in 1809 till within two years of his death. His learning, his industry, his literary taste, his unscrupulousness as a partisan, and his intense bigotry, all favored him in making the "Quarterly Review" what it was; worthy of immortality for its literary articles, and sure of an undesirable immortality as a monument of the extreme Toryism of its day, — with all its insolence, all its selfishness, unscrupulousness, and destitution of philosophy. Cold and cruel as Gifford was in his political and

satirical writings, he had a warm heart for gratitude and for friendship. He was generous in his transactions, and courteous in his manners; and he thus won a cordial affection from his friends, while he provoked a feeling of an adverse kind from the public at large. He left a considerable portion of his property to a member of Mr. Cookesley's family; and died on the last day of the year 1826, at the age of seventy. Professor Jardine. Professor Jardine, who taught logic at Glasgow College, and won to himself the respect and affection of a wide circle of eminent men, once his pupils, died at the age of eighty-four, on the 28th of January, 1827. Mitford, the historian of Greece, reached the age of eighty-three, and died Wm. Mitford. in February of the same year. His history was universally read, and celebrated accordingly in its early days; but this was mainly because it was uncontroverted and left unrivalled. Since the great recent expansion of the philosophy of history, Mitford's work has fallen into discredit, from which it is not likely to recover. Professor Dugald Stewart is never spoken of by those who knew him without affection and admiration, on account of the amiability and charm of his character and manners. Dugald Stewart. He early devoted himself to metaphysical speculation, and became the most popular lecturer on mental philosophy ever known in this country. For a long course of years, his lecture-room was crowded; and his circle of pupils was enlarged indefinitely by his frequent publication of his lectures, under one form or another. The service that he rendered to philosophy was, however, confined to that of interesting a wide public in the subjects which occupied his mind. He added nothing to the science which he undertook to teach; but rather drew away from the track of real science many minds which might have followed it, if they had not been enticed by the graces of his desultory learning into a wilderness where he indicated no path at all. No comprehensive principle is to be found amidst the whole mass of his works; no firm ground under his speculations; no substance beneath his illustrations. Nothing that he wrote under the name of philosophy could cohere for a moment under the test of science. And the science was already abroad, — the strong breeze which was to drive before it the mists of mere speculation. Prince Metternich — who, whatever had been his political sins, understood and appreciated as well as any man the nature and benefits of true science — had before this time, when Austrian Ambassador at the French court, guaranteed to Dr. Gall the expenses of the publication of his work on the functions of the brain; a work which has already begun to change the aspect of both medical science and mental philosophy throughout the civilized world. Dr. Gall's work had been prohibited —

as first-rate scientific achievements are apt to be everywhere — by the government at Vienna in 1802. In 1810, Prince Metternich himself had secured its presentation to the world. Before the close of the war, it had begun to modify the views of physicians and philosophers abroad; and soon after the war, when continental ideas began to reach Great Britain, the scientific discoveries of Dr. Gall were heard of in England; and they received in Scotland, before the death of Dugald Stewart, that primary homage of outrageous abuse from partisans of old systems, which invariably precedes an ultimate general reception. The noise reached the placid man; but it did not disturb him. He had lived a long and tranquil life, — amused with speculation, undisturbed by difficulties which were not apparent to him, unspoiled by adulation, unabashed by the excess of his popularity, cherished by family and friends, and undoubting about the permanence of his works. Those works it is impossible to characterize in any philosophical sense; for no basis is assigned for them, and no proof of any part of them is anywhere offered. The most positive part of them is a protest, sometimes expressed, sometimes implied, against the philosophy of Locke. They contain some recognition of facts of the mind which there is no attempt to account for; and much desultory information and disquisition, which are entertaining to read; and would be more so, if the reader could forget his constant unsatisfied craving for that analysis and reasoning which are always professed in the mere undertaking of such subjects, but are in the writings of Dugald Stewart nowhere to be found. He reached the age of seventy-four, and died in June, 1828, — two months before the great German physician and philosopher, who was to extinguish the Will-o'-the-wisps which, in the name of the Scotch philosophy, had beguiled multitudes while the continent and its science was closed to us. Dr. Gall died in the neighborhood of Paris, aged seventy-one, on the 22d of August, 1828.

A young man died during this period, whose name should perhaps be mentioned on account of the popularity of a poem which he published; such popularity, won by such a poem, being a curious sign of the times. The Rev. Robert Pollok, who had been educated at Glasgow, issued a long poem, called "The Course of Time," which immediately went through many editions, in spite of faults so offensive, and such an extraordinary absence of merits, as completely perplexed all the authoritative literary critics of the day. The truth seems to be, that Mr. Pollok's readers and admirers were the whole of that great and opulent body called, in common conversation, the religious world, — the great body which has a conscientious objection to the cultivation of taste by familiarity with the best models in

art and literature; with whom music is objectionable, as "exciting the passions;" painting, as "frivolous;" and Shakspeare and our other classics, as "profane." When a novel — Hannah More's "Cœlebs" — came in the way of this portion of the public, a novel which they might read, they carried it through a succession of editions presently; and now that a poem had come in their way, a poem that they might read, they devoured it so ravenously as to set the world and the reviews of the day wondering how it might be. The young author left the world before his brief fame reached its height. He was on his way to Italy, consumptive, when he died, in September, 1827.

In the days of the first French Revolution, when the excitement of the occasion brought out all existing enthusiasms in one form or another, many women found a voice, and listeners to their voice, who would have been little attended to at other times. Among these was Helen Maria Williams, a lady who had previously published some poems of small account, but whose political writings, animated by a sincere enthusiasm, were eagerly received both in England and in France. She was an ardent republican; and she was feared and hated accordingly by one party, and extolled by another. She was a woman of good intentions, warm benevolence, and considerable powers; but that there was a want of balance or sagacity in her mind seems to be shown by the fact, that she died a champion of the Bourbons and their rule. Her most celebrated works were her "Farewell to England," "Sketch of the Politics of France," and "State of Manners and Opinions in the French Republic." She died at Paris, before the breaking-out of the second Revolution, which would have perplexed and alarmed her extremely. Her death took place in December, 1827.

There is something interesting, and perhaps profitable, in noting cases of individuality of character, which make themselves felt and heard of amidst the organic movement of a highly civilized society; and we may therefore note the death of a lady whose story is still told by many firesides, where a gray-headed elder sits in the seat of honor. There were two high-born young ladies, of the families of the Marquis of Ormond and Lord Besborough, who, before the breaking-out of the first French Revolution, distressed their relations by an early disgust with the world, and longing for absolute seclusion. They left their homes together in 1779, and settled in retirement; but their families brought them back, and endeavored to separate them, that they might not encourage one another's "romance." The consequence was that they eloped; and it was some time before they could be traced. They settled near Llangollen, in Wales, where, for some years, the country people knew

them only by the name of "the ladies of the vale." Their friends hoped and believed that they would grow tired of their scheme; but they did not. They had refused marriage; and friendship, and the tranquillity of a country life, appeared to satisfy them to the end. It is true, those who visited them during the latter years of their lives were struck by their inquisitiveness about the affairs of the world, and especially about the gossip of high life in London. A singular sight it was, we are told, the reception of a visitor by these ancient ladies, in their riding-habits, with their rolled and powdered hair, their beaver hats, and their notions and manners of the last century, perfectly unchanged. Amidst the storms of revolutions, when the world was gathered into masses to contend for great questions, this quiet side-scene of romance and individuality is worth glancing at for a moment. Lady Eleanor Butler died in her Llangollen cottage on the 2d of June, 1829. She must have been about seventy years of age. Her companion followed in a few months.

It seems as if the world were destined to be stripped of its most eminent men of science during the period under review. Laplace and Volta died on the same day, — March 5, 1827, — the one in France, and the other in Italy; and, soon afterwards, three deaths took place in England within six months, which made scientific foreigners inquire of travellers, "Whom have you left?" On the 22d of December, 1828, died Dr. Wollaston, the most illustrious member of a family distinguished for science through three generations. The father and two uncles of William Hyde Wollaston were all Fellows of the Royal Society. He, in whose fame the distinction of his family is now concentrated, was born on the 6th of August, 1766. His profession was that of a physician; but he left it early in a fit of wrath at not being elected to a desired office in St. George's Hospital. He never repented of his hasty determination; and, from his devotion to science, he reaped all kinds of rewards. He was eminently useful to his race; he was happily occupied; he was highly honored; and he was very rich. One of his discoveries — that of a method by which platinum can be made ductile and malleable — brought him in 30,000*l.*; 10,000*l.* of which he gave away at a stroke to a relation who was in embarrassed circumstances. Dr. Wollaston's organization was in favor of his accomplishing with certainty and completeness whatever he undertook. His bodily senses were particularly acute and delicate; his understanding clear and patient; and his habits of thought and language eminently correct. From his singular accuracy of observation and reflection, he was able to pursue a method of research which would have been impossible to another kind of man. He was able to diminish and simplify the material and

apparatus of his experiments in chemistry and natural philosophy to a degree which appeared incredible to those who first heard of his methods. He could carry on a process in a thimble which the world would wonder at; and he would draw out from that little galvanic battery a wire too slender to be seen but in a full light. With an apparatus which would stand on a tea-tray, he would effect what another man would require a roomful of utensils to do. A grain of any substance would serve his purposes of analysis as well as another man's pound. This peculiarity, though chiefly interesting as characteristic of the man, is useful also, as suggesting to other laborers the practicability and benefit of simplifying the processes of chemical research. To a certain extent, his example may be imitable, though no one else is likely to arise gifted with his delicacy of sense, acuteness of sagacity, and precision of understanding, which made small amounts of evidence as good as large, if only they were indisputable. As for the immediate practical results of his labors, we have mentioned one whose profit to himself showed its immediate utility. He discovered two new metals, rhodium and palladium. Then we owe to him the camera-lucida; and that boon to practical chemists, the sliding scale of chemical equivalents; and that great help to crystallographers, the goniometer, or angle-measurer, by which the angle contained between two faces of a crystal can be measured with a degree of accuracy never before attainable. But it is an injury to great chemical discoverers to specify as the result of their labors those discoveries which take the form of inventions. We are thankful to have them; but they are a small benefit in comparison with the other services of such men. Their true service is in their general furtherance of science; their pioneering in new regions, or opening out new methods of procedure, whose importance cannot be at once communicated to, or appreciated by, the multitude of men. It is a good thing to invent a useful instrument, for the service or safety of society and men; but it is a much greater thing to evolve a new element, to discover a new substance, to exhibit a new combination of matter, and add confirmation to a general law. Wollaston did much in both ways to serve the world. He died of a disease of the brain, which, however, left his mind clear to the last. He employed his latter days in dictating to an amanuensis an account of the results of his labors. When he was speechless and dying, one of his friends observed aloud that he was in a state of unconsciousness; whereupon, he made signs for paper and pencil, wrote down figures, cast them up, and returned the paper, and the sum was right. He was in the sixty-third year of his age.

Dr. Thomas Young went next. He was the son of Quaker parents, whom he astonished not a little by his ability to read at

two years old. He appears to have been able to learn and to do whatever he chose; and that, with such versatility, he had any soundness of science at all, seems surprising. His first passion was for languages, even for the Oriental; and to this we owe the vast benefit of an introduction to the interpretation of the hieroglyphics of Egypt. It was Dr. Young who was the first to read the proper names in the hieroglyphic and enchorial inscriptions on the Rosetta stone, by a comparison of them with the third, — the Greek inscription; and it was on this hint that Champollion proceeded in his elaborate researches. It is by this service, and his re-invention or revival of the theory of the undulatory character of light, that Young is chiefly known; though there is hardly a department of natural science on which he did not cast some wondrous illumination. It is a common mistake of superficial readers to suppose, that there must have been three or four Dr. Youngs at work in different regions of the world of science. He was the last Secretary of the Board of Longitude; and then sole conductor of the "Nautical Almanac." His writings are too numerous for citation. He was a physician by profession; but the greatest service he rendered in that province was by his testimony to the empirical character of medical treatment, and the absence of all real science in that department of pursuit. He was himself too scientific to be a good practical physician, or to make his patients think him one. Where he saw no guiding principle, he could not pretend to a decision that he did not feel; and he was open in his complaints of the darkness which involves the laws of the human frame. When he said this in his lectures at St. George's Hospital, and avowed that his idea of the advantage of skill in medical practice was the advantage of holding a larger number of tickets in a lottery over a smaller, the students were offended, as this was, as Arago observes, a doctrine which students of medicine do not like to hear. From this cause of unpopularity, and from his instructions being too high and deep for the comprehension of his class, his lectures were not well attended, nor was his practice large; as the least scientific and therefore most confident practitioners must have, with the anxious and trusting sick, the advantage over those who are more aware of consequences while more doubtful about causes, till the laws of the human frame are less obscure than they as yet are. From these disappointments, and other causes of irritation, Dr. Young was not a happy man; and the controversies in which he was engaged are painful records of the aberrations from the serenity of science induced by those self-regards which the love of science should cast out. He was hardly and insultingly treated; but he might not have been so, if his temper had been worthy of his vocation. He and his enemies are gone

down to that common resting-place where there is no more strife ; and the testimony remains, of which Arago was the utterer, that among philosophers he must always be held to be one of the greatest whom England has produced in modern times.

The man who, of this group, presented the most strongly to the popular observation the attributes of genius, was Sir Humphry Davy. In his case, there was no occasion to offer, upon trust, assertions of his greatness, or assurances that a future generation would become aware that he was a transcendent man in his way. People all knew it during his life, whether they understood any thing of his services to science or not. His ardor, his eloquence, his poetical faculty, the nature of his intense egotism, his countenance, his manners, — before he was spoiled, — and his pleasures, all spoke the man of genius, from moment to moment. He brought the poet's mind into philosophical research, and the results were as brilliant as might be expected from such a concentration of such faculties as his. The world will for ever be the better for them. Those who know nothing else about him have heard of the Davy-lamp, and know what a service he rendered by tracking death through the foul caverns of the earth, to bind and disarm him. This was only one of many immediate practical services which he rendered to society before the eyes of all men, — the wise and ignorant together ; but the wise know that there is a host more behind, which the multitude must as yet take upon trust. The genius of the Cornish boy made itself felt by society before he had reached mature years ; and, when he lectured in London at the beginning of the century, he was probably the most popular man of his time, — so clear were his expositions, so beautiful his experiments, and so bewitching his ardent eloquence. When we call him perhaps the most popular man of his time, we mean with the listening public ; for he was not popular in private life. Besides the degree of wildness which appears in all the evidence of his life and writings, there was an excessive egotism, a lack of magnanimity, an insufferable pride and vanity united, which destroyed all pleasure on both sides in his intercourses with others than his flatterers. His visit to Paris ended badly, hearty as was the welcome accorded to himself and his discoveries by the French philosophers. The serenity of a life of scientific research was not his. He had manifold and intense enjoyments, but not the peace which occupies the unsophisticated mind when employed in its noble researches into the secrets of nature. His ambition did not take the direction of wealth. About money, he was simple-minded and generous. As for the rest, such men are so rare that they may well be permitted the isolation of egotism when they must have so much isolation of other kinds. It is happy for themselves, and for those about

them, if they can preserve the childlike nature, innocent, humble, and loving, which bears the truest affinity to genius; but, if the world comes in to strip genius of its natural graces, we must not reckon too hardly with a being so singularly circumstanced, but honor and glory in the gifts that remain, and let the losses go. Davy was born at Penzance, in December, 1778. He arrived in London in 1801; was knighted in 1812; and was afterwards, in 1818, made a baronet: but, his marriage being childless, his title died with him. He became President of the Royal Society in 1820; went abroad in ill health in 1825, and again, and finally, in the early part of 1828, dying at Geneva on the 29th of May, 1829. The authorities of Geneva decreed a public funeral; and there was wide-spread mourning in England when the news arrived that her great philosopher had sunk into the grave at the age of fifty-one. Davy and Wollaston never crossed each other's path, the character of their minds and their methods of pursuing science being essentially unlike. Wollaston was the elder by twelve years; and on some occasions he was called the Mentor of the younger and more brilliant genius: but they generally worked apart, and certainly without mutual hinderance, if without co-operation. While Wollaston was busy with his thimble, and a shaving of metal, and a pinch of earth, using the most delicate manipulation and refined observation, Davy was rushing about in his laboratory, among heaps of apparatus and masses of material, holding to his work for days and nights together, or half-killing himself by respiring fatal gases. Wollaston never declared a fact or a doctrine, even to his own mind, till the verification of every step of the evidence was complete; while Davy intrepidly published the proofs of the error of his own former published opinions. Wollaston was seldom or never wrong; Davy was often miraculously right. Both had sagacity not to be surpassed; but the sagacity of the one was clear insight, and of the other excited prevision. Both men were too great to be confined within the limits of their own science. Wollaston was a man of various reading and open intellect; and he was capable of genuine intercourse with minds of various character. Davy had not that liberality; but his own pursuits were diversified. He loved sport — fishing and fowling — with all the intensity of his nature. He was fond of what he thought to be mental and moral philosophy, and attached an unaccountable value to his writings on such subjects. That estimate, however, must be regarded as one of his wildnesses, and as another instance of that opposition which is so common between great men and everybody else as to what they can do best and worst. The inspiration of Davy's genius could not but leave some traces in his miscellaneous writings, and we find accordingly a passage of beauty

here and there; but, if there is philosophy in them, it is such as may be dropped through the dreams of the night. Amidst his mass of achievements, we may well throw out without slight what there was of mistake and transient; but Wollaston left as little as it is possible for fallible and tentative man to leave for rejection, and much, very much, for which the world will ever be the better. They were two wonderful and truly great men; and at the date under our notice, and for long after, the scientific world felt blank and dreary without them.

Major Rennell is considered the first Englishman who ever attained a high and permanent reputation as a geographer. He began life in the navy, and early showed what he was capable of in surveying. After being in India, he was induced to leave the navy for the army; and he went out to Bengal, as an officer of engineers. His Bengal atlas, and some charts of great value, appeared before long. His greatest work is "The Geographical System of Herodotus;" a work of the highest interest and importance to untravelled scholars, and a marvel in its way, from the fact that Major Rennell could not read Greek, — had no better translation of Herodotus than Beloe's, and was actually able to detect the errors of the translation, by his sagacity and his geographical knowledge together. He assisted Dr. Vincent in making out the track of Nearchus for his Commentary on Arrian's account of that voyage; he assisted Sir William Jones in his Oriental collections; and it was he who made out Mungo Park's track, from his journals and descriptions; and, by comparing Park's account with prior discoveries, formed the map which accompanies the Travels, with an approach to correctness since proved to be truly surprising. One of his most remarkable and interesting works is his "Observations on the Topography of the Plain of Troy," which the lovers of Homer rushed to read, and have studied ever since. As a practical boon, none of his labors are more important than his account of the currents in the oceans navigated by European ships. This excellent man and eminent public benefactor lived to the age of eighty-eight; being born near Chudleigh, in Devonshire, in 1742, and dying on the 29th of March, 1830. Though he never reached a higher rank than that of major in the army, and Surveyor-general of Bengal, he had abundance of honors in the scientific world, being a member of the chief learned societies in Europe. His must have been an eminently happy life; full of diversity and interest, full of innocence and uprightness, and of achievements of the most unquestionable value to the whole society of the civilized world.

Among the philanthropists whose lives and labors closed during this period, the name of Pestalozzi ought not to be omit-

ted; for, though a foreigner, he was a benefactor to our country and people. One of the most remarkable results of the peace was the improvement in methods of education in countries which had for many years been shut up within themselves, but could now freely communicate with each other. Pestalozzi was the principal medium of this benefit to England. He was a Swiss, born at Zurich, in 1746; and his benevolence led him to surrender all the ordinary views of young men entering upon the profession of the law, and to devote himself to the service of the ignorant and poor. As director of an orphan institution at Stanz, he obtained experience, and the opportunity of testing the value of some of his ideas on the training of the human mind. Here he was seen at work by various English travellers, or his pupils were encountered here and there; and his popular works were made known among us, and the rage for the Pestalozzian method of education which ensued can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. This Pestalozzian method was, in fact, the Socratic, but applied to little children, with whom Socrates himself would probably not have used it. Hitherto, common-place and unreflecting parents and teachers had gone on in the old method, — putting every thing into a child, and not thinking of bringing any thing out; while reflecting and able teachers had, of course, done both. Now, every thing was to be done by the interrogative method, and nothing was to be received by the memory which could in any way be made otherwise accessible. The suffering of a multitude of children was at first very great, as under every new fashion in education; and there are many who rue the prevalence of that fashion to this day. But this was no fault of Pestalozzi's. It was not his way to tease a little child with questions that it could not see the drift of, till every fibre in its frame was quivering with irritation. It was not his way to work a child's reasoning faculties before they ought to have been appealed to at all, or to forbid the natural and pleasant exercise of the flourishing memory of childhood, till a little creature might be seen clutching a vocabulary or chronological table, as most children lay hands on a fairy tale. He interrogated his pupils only on subjects which they were able and ready to understand, and on which they had ideas which they could produce on easy solicitation. But the truth was, his procedure was more a peculiar talent than a system; and it was impossible that it could be extensively imitated without serious abuse, for which he was, all the while, in no way responsible. Serious as were the abuses at first in England, as no doubt elsewhere, the benefits given us by Pestalozzi unquestionably and immeasurably surpassed them. The mischief was one which was certain to work its own cure; while all that was noble and

true must live and grow. Pestalozzi's respect for the human mind, wherever he found it; his sense of its equal and infinite rights, under all circumstances; his recognition of the diversity of its faculties; his skill in enlarging its scope, and substantiating its knowledge,—all this was like a new idea to a nation of parents who had been too long shut up alone with old methods, and debarred from intercourse with thinkers abroad. Since that time, English children have had a better chance in education,—those of them who are educated at all; a better chance of a natural and timely development of their various faculties,—physical, intellectual, and moral. Therefore it is that we may fairly class Pestalozzi among our national benefactors, and record his death among the national losses. He died at the age of eighty-two, on the 17th of February, 1827.

Another educator died during this period, whose name should not be ungratefully passed over,—Dr. Watson, of the Deaf and Dumb Institution, in the Kent Road, London. Dr. Watson. Without going into any general account of the education of the deaf and dumb, we may note, in explanation of Dr. Watson's services, that the most fatal oversight in that branch of education has been that of supposing that a full communication of mind, and reception of ideas, can be obtained by written language and gesture. Written words and gesture are but the signs of language after all; and, without oral communication, the mind cannot possibly be fully exercised and cultivated. This difficulty is, to all appearance, insuperable; but men have risen up, from time to time, who saw, that, though the deaf and dumb can never be brought to an equality of cultivation with those who have the full use of speech, much is gained by giving them spoken as well as written language; and Dr. Watson was the man who gave the deaf and dumb more power in this direction than any preceding teacher. Bulwer, the chirosofist, opened up the track in England in the seventeenth century; and his work, dated 1648, plainly shows that he taught articulate speech, as well as the written and hand language. Wallis followed, being a contemporary of Bulwer, and anxious to engross the merit which belonged truly to him. Dr. Wallis had great merit; but he is proved not to have been a discoverer. Articulate speech had been found attainable for the born deaf previously in Spain, and subsequently in Holland, where Dr. Amman published his method in full; and, during the eighteenth century, Germany and France followed. Henry Baker taught various deaf and dumb persons to speak: but he bound them over not to reveal his method; and, though he half promised Dr. Johnson to make it known, he never did so. Thomas Braidwood began his career in 1760, at Edinburgh, and carried to some extent the practice

of articulate speech among his pupils. When he removed to London, in 1783, Dr. Watson studied and worked at his institution, and made up his mind to devote himself to the education of that unfortunate class, of whom there are not fewer than 13,000 in our islands; and in his eyes the practice of articulate speech was indispensable to the attainment of such cultivation as could be afforded. For five and forty years he labored at his benevolent task, and he carried the capability of speech much higher than any predecessor. In regard to the general run of his pupils, an authority declares, "Some of the pupils articulate not unpleasantly: their reading is monotonous, but their animation in ordinary conversations, especially on subjects of interest to them, gives a species of natural tone and emphasis to what they say." This, great as it is, is not all. A few days before Dr. Watson's death, one of his private pupils was called to the bar by the Honorable Society of the Middle Temple. Here were tidings for a good man to receive on his death-bed! The days of miracles will never be over while human benevolence is unexhausted; and here we have, for a sign of our own times, a good man soothed to his rest by the blessings of the dumb. Dr. Watson died on the 23d of November, 1829, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

It is not a purely melancholy task to make up this account of our national losses. In the presence of great deeds, the doers fade into shadows even during their life, except to the few to whom they are dear for other reasons than their deeds. The shadowy form is dissolved by death, and we strain our eyes to catch the last trace, and sigh when it is gone; but the substance remains in the deeds done, and yet more in the immortal ideal of the man.

B O O K IV.

CHAPTER I.

THE valetudinarian King was gone, with his moods and caprices; and with him went all the considerations of expediency which had determined the political conduct of the year, on every side. It was not now necessary to have the most peremptory man in the empire to hold its first office, for the purpose of keeping its sovereign in order. There was no longer an incessant appeal to the generosity of the three bodies in opposition to abstain from joining to throw out the Ministry. There need no longer be a mere show of transacting business, while in reality nothing was done,—through the mechanical character of the Administration on the one hand, and the desultory forbearance of the opposition on the other. It was no longer necessary that the country should be without a government in fact, while the nation was kindling and stirring under the news from France, which became more interesting every day. There was now a King who did not shut himself up with his discontents and his flatterers, but who walked in London streets, with William IV. his umbrella under his arm, and gave a frank and sailor-like greeting to all old acquaintances, whoever they might be. There was no longer a King who regarded every contravention of his prejudices as a personal injury; but one who sincerely and kindly desired the welfare of his people, without any regard to his personal feelings. He gave an immediate and strong proof of this by continuing the Duke of Wellington and his colleagues in power, notwithstanding a well-understood personal disinclination, and from the pure desire not to unsettle public affairs till the national will should have shown itself in the elections. He had not been many days on the throne, when he took the opportunity, at some public collation, of proposing the Duke of Wellington's health, and declaring, in a manner more well-meant than dignified, that it was a mistake to suppose that he had any ill-feeling,—any feeling but of entire confidence in his good friend, the Duke of Wellington. A steady man, of determined will, he

certainly did require as head of his government, as every British sovereign must, in days when sovereigns have little power, and scanty means of knowledge of the national mind and needs; and, in this case, the sovereign was at no time a man of ability, and often liable to attacks of incapacitating illness; and he was sixty-five years of age: but he was honest, unselfish, and earnestly desirous to do his duty well; so that the steadiness of his Prime Minister was required, not to control him, but to inform and guide and aid him in the fulfilment of his function. There was in no direction any necessity for the Wellington Ministry to remain in power, unless by the wish of the nation; and what the desire of the nation was, the elections would soon show.

The late King had died on the 26th of June. On the 29th, William IV. sent down his first message to Parliament,—just after the unhappy King of France had addressed his last words to his people, and while the elections were proving that he had lost all.¹ King William's message, after adverting to the loss sustained by himself and the nation, declared his opinion that the sooner the necessary new elections took place, the better; and recommended the Commons to make provision, without delay, for the maintenance of the public service during the interval between the close of the present session and the meeting of the new Parliament.

This was very well, as far as it went; but it struck everybody on the instant that there was an enormous omission. The King was childless; and the Princess Victoria, who was to succeed him, if he died without heirs, was only eleven years old. Without express provision, there is no recognition by the law of the minority of a sovereign; and, if the King should die before the new Parliament met, this child would be sovereign without control, unless some provision were made for a regency. Something must be done about this, many members of both Houses and of all parties said; but they took a day to consider how they should proceed. On this first day, they spoke merely on that part of the message which related to the death of the late King,—the Duke of Wellington's motion in reply being seconded by Lord Grey, and Sir Robert Peel's by Mr. Brougham. All was thus far civility and harmony; a civility and harmony which endured for that day only.

On the 30th, Lord Grey in the one House, and Lord Althorp in the other, moved for the delay of a day in replying to the message, in the understood hope that the King would send down a request to Parliament to consider the subject of a regency. The grounds on which the ministers resisted this proposition

¹ Hansard, xxv. p. 706.

were such as now excite astonishment. They talked of the excellence of the King's health; of "not indulging in such gloomy forebodings;" of this not being a matter of pressing necessity; and of its being so important in its nature that it should be left for the deliberation of a new Parliament, instead of being brought forward when the minds of members were occupied with their approaching election conflicts: the fact remaining clear to all men's minds, that by an overturn of the King's carriage, or a fall of his horse, or the slipping of his foot, or an attack of illness, the country might be plunged into inextricable difficulty, from which the legislation of a day or two now might save it. The Dukes of Newcastle and Richmond, Lords Wellesley and Londonderry, and even Lord Eldon, voted with Lord Grey, though the Duke had said that he should regard a defeat as the signal for the dissolution of the Ministry.¹ The Ministry, however, obtained a majority of forty-four in the House of Peers, and of forty-six in the Commons. The general conviction resulting from this affair was, that all compromise was now over; that the Duke was laying aside his method of balancing the sections of opposition against each other, and intending to try his strength, while the opposition no longer thought it necessary to spare him. Mr. Brougham lost no time in taking out in full the license which he had of late, on the whole, denied himself, and on this night used language, and excited uproar, which deprived the opponents of parliamentary reform of their plea of the dignity and decorum of the House as then constituted. Some one having complained of a "peculiar cry," — whether a baa, a bray, or a ^{Manners of} grunt, Hansard does not say, — a "peculiar cry which ^{the Commons.}" was heard amidst the cheers of the House," Mr. Brougham observed, that, "by a wonderful disposition of nature, every animal had its peculiar mode of expressing itself; and he was too much of a philosopher to quarrel with any of those modes." And, presently after, he called up Sir Robert Peel to a personal altercation, by saying, after a reference to the Duke of Wellington, "Him I accuse not.² It is you I accuse, — his flatterers, — his mean, fawning parasites." Such quarrels are always got rid of with more or less quibbling and ill-grace; but it should be noted that they did occur before the great opening of the representation which was now near at hand. Much was said by the enemies of parliamentary reform of the vulgarity of manners which would certainly show itself in the House when the manufacturing towns were represented; but at this time it was the complaint of strangers who attended the debates, that not only violence of language was occasionally very great, but that offensive noises — the braying, baaing, crowing, mewing of animals

¹ Hansard, xxv. p. 767.

² Hansard, xxv. p. 825.

— were ventured upon and tolerated in the House to an extent which would not be thought of in any other association assembled for grave purposes.

The King's answer to the address contained no allusion to the subject of a regency; nor did he make any reference to it in any form. The omission was daring; but nobody doubted that the ministers pressed upon him, as upon Parliament, the consideration of "a great present inconvenience" being of more consequence than a "remote future risk;" and the King did not die during the recess, so as to put the fallacy to the proof.¹ How much he thought of dying during those weeks, and whether he felt like a family-man who is prevented by vexatious accidents from making his will, and who grows nervous about his personal safety till the thing is done, there is no knowing; but the matter was discussed with deep interest in the homes of the land,— children and adults wondering whether the little princess was aware of her position; whether, if the King were now to die, she would have the sense to desire a regency for some years, or whether she would choose to rule according to her own pleasure; and, if so, what kind of persons she would select for her ministers. There was another consideration uppermost in all minds, and largely concerned in the question, though it could not be openly spoken of in Parliament. After the King's death, the Duke of Cumberland would be her eldest uncle. He must succeed to the crown of Hanover, which descends only to male heirs. Would he go to Hanover and stay there, and let England alone? To say that the Duke of Cumberland was unpopular throughout the empire, would be to use language too feeble for the fact. He was hated; and hated with that mixture of fear which belongs to total disesteem. It was widely felt that the Princess would not be safe, if unprotected by a regency, on ascending the throne in childhood; and it was generally believed that the nation would not submit to any kind or degree of rule, governance, or influence from the Duke of Cumberland. This being the state of the royal family, and the warning condition of France being before all eyes, it was an act of extraordinary rashness in the Ministry to insist on the dissolution of Parliament before any provision had been made for a regency.

It was carefully pointed out, when the King came down to prorogue Parliament, that he appeared to be in excellent health. There was something exhilarating in the sight of a King in excellent health, coming down with an open face and frank demeanor, to meet his Parliament. He wore his admiral's uniform under the royal robes.² There was not much in his speech; for the session did not supply much mat-

¹ Hansard, xxv. p. 761.

² Hansard, xxv. p. 1315.

ter. The most important point was that with which the speech concluded; an expression of his desire that, as Parliament had declared its will that civil distinctions on account of religious opinion should cease, his subjects universally should join with him in promoting peace, and burying all such differences in oblivion.

The next day, July 24, Parliament was dissolved by proclamation; and in a few hours the bustle of the new elections began. In a few days, some of them were actually decided; for the writs were made returnable on the 14th of September. Dissolution.

The people of England, Scotland, and Ireland, met together in crowds for other purposes than electing their representatives. By this time the three days in Paris were over; the French people had thrown off the Polignac tyranny, and the English were not slow to congratulate them. Sympathy with France Public meetings were held in counties and towns to prepare addresses for this purpose; and a long file of deputations crossed the Channel to present these addresses in Paris. At these meetings, men spoke to each other, in high exhilaration, of the bearing of these French events upon their own political affairs. They pointed out to each other how the representation was the central ground of struggle; and how victory there was total victory. They agreed upon the powerlessness of kings, cabinets, and armies, when in opposition to the popular will; and all who were in any degree on the liberal side in politics saw that now was the time to secure that reform of Parliament which was a necessary condition of all other political reforms. That was a stirring time in England. Again, the men of the towns went out early in the summer mornings, or late at night, to meet the mails; and brought news to the breakfast table, or to the eager listeners round the lamp, that Paris was in a state of siege; that the Parisians had taken Paris; that the French King was coming to England; that the Chambers had met at the appointed time, as if no impediment had arisen; that the tri-color had been seen in the Thames, and that the Duke of Wellington, riding along the wharves, had turned away his head from the sight with unconcealed anger and mortification; that, though the King had called the Duke his friend, it was clear that we could not have an intimate of Prince Polignac for our Prime Minister; that almost the whole newspaper press of England was hostile to the present Administration; and, finally, that the men of Yorkshire had sent such a requisition to Harry Brougham to become their representative as left scarcely a doubt of his triumphant return; a portentous sign of the times, if such should be the issue.

There is something very affecting to those who were of mature years at that time in looking back upon these glories of the Harry Brougham who was the hope and admiration of so large a portion of the liberal body in the nation. As he himself said, he had now arrived at the pinnacle of his fame; he had attained an honor which could never be paralleled. When he said this, he did not contemplate decline; nor did those who listened to him; nor did the liberal party generally. Those who did were some close observers, who had never had confidence in him, and who knew that sobriety of thought, and temperance of feeling, were essential to success in a commanding position, though they might not be much missed in one of struggle and antagonism. These observers, who had seen, that, with all his zeal, his strong spirit of pugnacity, his large views of popular rights and interests, Henry Brougham gave no evidences of magnanimity, patience, moderation, and self-forgetfulness, felt now, as throughout his course, that power would be too much for him, and that his splendid talents were likely to become conspicuous disgraces. This was what was soon to be tried; and in the interval he stood, in these times of popular excitement, the first man in England; called by the popular voice to represent the first constituency in England, in a season when constituencies and their chosen representatives were the most prominent objects in the nation's eye. Mr. Brougham had been twenty-one years in public life; his endowments were the most splendid conceivable, short of the inspiration of genius; and they had been, thus far, employed on behalf of popular interests. Men thought of his knowledge and sagacity on colonial affairs, shown early in his career; they thought of his brave and faithful advocacy of the Queen's cause; they thought of his labors for popular enlightenment,—of his furtherance of Mechanics' Institutes, of the London University, and of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge; they thought of his plans for the reform of the law, and his labors in making justice accessible to the poor; they thought of his mighty advocacy for the claims of the slave, and of his thundering denunciations of oppression in that and every other relation; and they reasonably regarded him as a great man and the hope of his country. It was so reasonable to regard him thus, that those who had misgivings were ashamed of them, and concealed them so anxiously, that it is certain that Mr. Brougham had as fair a field as any man ever had for showing what he could do. But, though those who knew him best concealed their doubts, the doubts were there; doubts whether his celebrated oratory was not mainly factitious,—vehement and passionate, but not simple and heartfelt; doubts whether a temper of jealousy and irritability would not poison any work into which it could find

entrance ; doubts whether a vanity so restless and insatiable must not speedily starve out the richest abilities ; doubts whether a habit of speech so exaggerated, of statements so inaccurate, would not soon be fatal to respect and confidence ; doubts about the perfect genuineness of his popular sympathies, — not charging him with hypocrisy, but suspecting that the people were an object in his imagination, rather than an interest in his heart, — a temporary idol to him, as he was to them. These doubts made the spectacle of Henry Brougham at the head of the representation of Great Britain an interesting and anxious one to those who knew him well, whether from personal intercourse or from a close study of his career. With all the other Liberals of England, it was an occasion of unbounded triumph. He has since publicly and repeatedly referred to this period as that of his highest glory ; and there are now none, probably, who do not agree with him. At this Yorkshire election, when four representatives were required, five candidates came forward, and Mr. Brougham stood next to Lord Morpeth, who headed the poll.

A very few days were enough to show the ministers what they had to expect from the new House. The Tory mag-
New House.
nates, whom they had offended by their liberal measures, took this opportunity of revenging themselves, and returned members opposed to them, who, though not Liberals, served the purposes of the Liberals nearly as well as if they had been comrades. Two brothers and a brother-in-law of Sir Robert Peel were thrown out. Mr. Hume came in for the county of Middlesex, while the Duke of Newcastle was causing the return of members hostile to the Ministry. Their faithful friend the Duke of Rutland could not carry the county of Cambridge ; and Lord Ebrington was returned for Devonshire. No Cabinet Minister obtained a seat by any thing like open and popular election. Of the eighty-two county members, only twenty-eight were avowedly on the ministerial side, while forty-seven were avowedly on the other side. Of the twenty-eight members representing the greatest cities, three were ministerialists, and twenty-four Liberals. Such being the state of things where the elections were open and popular, and the proprietors of close boroughs being still steady anti-Catholics, the fate of the Ministry was sealed, and known to be so, before the summer was over. Even the revolutions on the continent, now following one another with a rapidity which, at a different time, would have pressed all the Conservatives in England into close union, had not at present that effect. The great soldier, the peremptory commander, the iron Duke, must be got rid of ; and then all good Conservatives would join at once, and see what must be done to save the Church and the State. The

Ministry, on their part, hoped to effect some good understanding in the interval betwixt August and November. In September, an event occurred which seemed to open some prospect of this; though the ministers themselves were too much touched and grieved at heart to think of such a result so soon as some of their less interested adherents.

The first great English railway was completed, and the line from Liverpool to Manchester was opened on Wednesday, the 15th of September. The Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, and other great men, arrived to take part in the ceremony, which was to have been succeeded by a banquet at Manchester. Mr Huskisson was already on the spot, having arrived, as soon as the state of his feeble health permitted it, to visit the constituency of Liverpool, who had elected him in his absence.

Death of Mr. Huskisson. Before the trains left Liverpool, a particular request was made that none of the company would leave the carriages, and the printed bills exhibited a caution to the same effect; but, when the trains stopped at Parkside, several of the party alighted, and a mutual friend of the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Huskisson thought that this would be a good opportunity for bringing them together, and putting an end to the coolness which had existed between them since Mr. Huskisson's dismissal from the Cabinet. Both parties were willing and cordial. When the Duke saw Mr. Huskisson approaching, he advanced, and held out his hand; and, almost before the friendly grasp was loosened, some one took alarm at the approach of a locomotive, and there was a general cry to those who were standing in the road, "Get in, get in!" If Mr. Huskisson had stood still beside the car, he would have been safe. Whether, feeble and nervous from illness, he was attempting to get round the open door of the car, in order to enter it, or whether he was merely holding by it, appears not to be known. The event was that the open door by which he held was struck by the locomotive, and threw down Mr. Huskisson, who fell, with his leg doubled across the rail, so that the limb was instantly crushed. He was at once aware that the accident was fatal; and he died that night, at the parsonage at Eccles, where he was conveyed with all skill and tenderness. The ministers were in no spirits for further public exhibition that day, and they would fain have withdrawn: but it was represented to them how serious would be the public alarm in such a place as Manchester; how report would exaggerate the mischief, if they were not seen; and how fatal might even be the effect on future railway travelling of a false panic that day; and they consented to proceed. All was now gloom; and the chief guests refused to leave the car at Manchester, or do more than the public safety required.

It was not they who immediately began to consider what effect this mournful death would have on their political position ; but, as was natural, there were many who did. The "Canningites" would now merge into another party. For some time there had been no sufficient peculiarity of doctrine or principle to necessitate their forming a separate party ; and that they did stand aloof was owing to the state of feeling between the Duke and Mr. Huskisson. That was all over now. There was no quarrel which survivors ought to keep alive ; and it was hoped that the Grants and Lord Palmerston would strengthen the Ministry in the Lower House. It was too late for this, however. The Ministry had done their utmost, and in vain, to exclude Mr. Charles Grant from Inverness ; and Mr. Robert Grant had thrown out a brother of Sir Robert Peel's at Norwich. The few remaining "Canningites" advanced towards liberalism from this day. The only hope now was that the bringing forward of the parliamentary reform question in revolutionary times would alarm all but the extreme Liberals into union at the last moment.

Up to the last moment, indeed, matters looked gloomy enough. In October, the Viceroy of Ireland, through his secretary, Sir Henry Hardinge, issued a proclamation intended to prevent the meeting of an association for promoting the repeal of the union.¹ The prohibition was positive and comprehensive : but British governments and British officials did not yet know Daniel O'Connell ; how impossible it was to restrain him by law in the prosecution of his enterprises, or to have dealings with him, as between man and man. Daniel O'Connell issued his proclamations forthwith, in which he arraigned "that paltry, contemptible, little English soldier, that had the audacity to put his pitiful and contemptible name to an atrocious Polignac proclamation ;" and laid down the law about obtaining the repeal of the union. He declared, as he continued to declare to the end of his life, that the repeal of the union was just at hand, and that "no power on earth could prevent it, except the folly or the crimes of some of the Irish themselves." He proposed "that a society should be formed to meet in Dublin, to be called the Association of Irish Volunteers ;" the motto of the society to be "1782," over the word "*Resurgam*."² The members were to be unarmed, open in all their proceedings, and to be active, in the first place, in procuring petitions from every parish in Ireland in behalf of repeal of the union. In the course of his speeches and proclamations on this matter, Mr. O'Connell used language with regard to Sir H. Hardinge, for which he was called to account by that gentleman. A recurrence to this fact

O'Connell
and the
Viceroy.

¹ Annual Register, 1830, Chron. p. 174.

² Dublin Freeman's Journal, Oct. 23, 1830.

seems to take us back to a distant time indeed ; all modern recollections of O'Connell being such as to attach an idea of ridicule to any person resenting his foulness of language. On this occasion he behaved as disgracefully as possible, shuffling about what expressions he did or did not use, and refusing to accept a challenge. There cannot be a finer spectacle in our time, than an honorable man refusing to fight a duel, from a conviction of the sin and folly of that kind of ordeal in a Christian nation and a modern age. But then it is essential that he be an honorable man, observing the Christian rule of doing as he would be done by, and peaceable and inoffensive, as truly brave and considerate men always are. It was far otherwise with O'Connell : he was the bully all over, — the most foul-mouthed railer of his time ; and, till men left off calling him to account, he always fell back upon his conscientious objection to duelling. He indulged in offence, and then made a merit of declining the penalty. As his sons grew up, he permitted them, two or three times, to fight his duels for him ; but the public cry of disgust and indignation was so strong, that he at length forbade his sons to fight in his quarrels, and made a merit out of that.¹ The correspondence on occasion of this offence to Sir H. Hardinge settles the matter for ever about O'Connell's honor, and the possibility of having dealings with him, as between man and man ; and it is referred to here as an evidence that all parties who afterwards courted him, or allied themselves with him, more or less, for whatever political purposes, were not entitled to complain when he betrayed, insulted, and reviled them. That any terms should have been held with O'Connell, by governments, English public, or gentlemen, in or out of Parliament, after his present agitation for repeal, and his published correspondence with Sir H. Hardinge's aide, in October, 1830, is one of the moral disgraces of our time. It shows that a man's abilities and political influence can secure to him an impunity for bullying, cowardice, and falsehood, which would drive a man of meaner talents and power from any society in the land. It is at this time that we find first recorded that expression of O'Connell's which he used, with the utmost freedom of application, for the rest of his life. The Administration was "base, bloody, and brutal ;" and, henceforward, every law, every Cabinet, every person, and every party, that he objected to, was "base, bloody, and brutal ;" and it really appears as if every successive party to whom the epithets were applied, winced under them as if they had never been used before, or as if they carried any weight.

Our country and our time have, since this date, rung with the Irish cry of "Repeal of the union!" and this seems the occasion on which to look and see what it means.

Repeal of
the union.

¹ Annual Register, 1830, Chron. pp. 176, 178.

There are many in France and Germany, and a multitude in America, who would be surprised that any question could be made as to the meaning of that cry. They suppose the case to be plain enough; that England conquered Ireland, and has ever since oppressed her; draining her of her produce, insulting her religion, being indifferent to her discontents, and careless of her woes. They suppose that the entire Irish people wish to be wholly separated from England, and insist that a nation which desires to live by itself, and to govern itself, should be allowed to do so. Of course, they believe that the reason why England does not let Ireland go, is, that the territorial possession and its produce are of consequence to England. Such was the story told by O'Connell to the world, though it is utterly impossible that he could have believed it himself. He had too much warrant in history for some of his complaints. It was true that Ireland had once been fiercely conquered and cruelly oppressed; that, till now, her Catholic population had been bitterly insulted by exclusion from political rights on account of their faith; that the Church of seven-eighths of her people was still insulted by the presence of an established Episcopal Church, and endowed Protestant meeting-houses; and that a large proportion of her people were in a condition of political discontent, and intolerable social misery. Thus much was true: but O'Connell, in his addresses to the ignorant among his countrymen, and to the world abroad, never failed to cast the blame of ancient tyranny on the existing generation; never failed to impute the purely social miseries of Ireland to political causes; never failed to suppress the fact that Ireland had any imperial rights at all, or to throw contempt and ridicule on benefits which he could not ignore; never held forth to his countrymen the means of welfare which they had in their power, if they would but use them; and, above all, never made the slightest rational attempt to show how the repeal of the union would cure their woes, and give them peace and comfort. Any one who studies his speeches, as a series, may see that he knew the truth, from the directions in which he levels his vituperation and his sarcasm. He certainly knew that the miserable tenure of land, and multiplication of a destitute population, were the chief causes of the miseries of Ireland; and that, as a natural consequence, the people would not work, and were prone to outrage. He certainly knew that these evils could not be cured by a Parliament sitting in Dublin. He certainly knew that nearly all persons of education and property in Ireland were averse to a repeal of the union, and did not choose that it should take place. He certainly knew that such a complexity of interests had grown up between England and Ireland during their imperial connection as made separation

impossible, and that the interests of Great Britain would no more permit her to have for an independent neighbor an insular nation in a state of desperate and reckless misery, — as Ireland would be, if left to her own turbulence and poverty, — than her conscience would permit her to cast off from her protection a people whom she had formerly helped to make miserable. From O'Connell's speeches, during a course of years, it is clear that he well knew all these things; yet it was his custom to speak, when on Irish ground, as if all the Irish desired repeal; as if the Dublin Parliament would truly represent the Irish people; as if Irish industry would thrive when commerce with England should be stopped; as if repeal would give to every man, for his own, the land he lived on; as if Irish turbulence were merely the result of English provocation; and as if all had been well in Ireland till the British connection began, and would be immediately well again if that connection could be dissolved. As for the reasons why any man should plead such a cause in such a way, they seem clear enough in this case. Among the ignorant of his own countrymen, and uninformed foreigners, he obtained credence enough to give him great power; and this power sustained him in his chosen career as an agitator in Ireland. Moreover, he believed, and truly, that it gave him great importance in England, — great power of annoyance to the government, — great power of obstruction in Parliament, — a power of intimidation which he could take up at any time when he had an object to gain for himself or his country. He raised the repeal cry whenever any benefit to Ireland was moved for, to hasten it, as he thought; and, again, whenever it was granted, to save the awkwardness of acknowledgment: and he raised it in the autumn of every year, — unless some other cry was abroad which would spare this for once, — when the O'Connell rent was to be collected. As for the question of repeal itself, let us see how it stands, apart from the prejudice which O'Connell connected with it.

People had different opinions about what the effect would be in Ireland of granting measures which had been too long delayed. When the Duke of Wellington was proposing Catholic emancipation, he said, at his own table, at a ministerial dinner, "It is a bad business; but we are aground." Lord Sidmouth¹ asked, "Does Your Grace think, then, that this concession will tranquilize Ireland?" — "I can't tell. I hope it will," the Duke replied. He shortly discovered and owned his mistake. The Duke was no philosopher, to be sure; but, if he had been, he would have seen that the union itself, though working well on the whole, worked very slowly, because it had been too long delayed. And

¹ Life of Lord Sidmouth, iii. p. 425.

this other great measure, being much too long delayed, could not be expected to "tranquillize Ireland," so as to gratify the eyes of existing statesmen with the spectacle of tranquillity.

The slightest observation of Ireland, and the most superficial knowledge of her history, must convince every one, that if she had been an independent kingdom from 1782, or earlier, she would have been from that time in a state of misery and ruin which could not have been allowed in any civilized quarter of the world, either for her own sake or that of her neighbors. The civil wars of her factions, and the hunger of her swarming multitudes, must presently have destroyed her as a nation. If she had been up to this time an ally, or self-governing province of Great Britain, instead of being incorporated with her, her ruin could hardly have been less complete. In such a case, it is impossible to prevent the weaker going to the wall. It is impossible to prevent more or less abuse of power by the stronger party, and to obviate the jealousy or sycophancy of the leading men of the weaker, who make their own people their prey. We have a picture of Scotland, before and after the union, which may enlighten us much in regard to the case of Ireland, though Scotland never was subject to the worst economical evils of Ireland; economical evils which are the true cause of her miseries, and which can be remedied only by her intimate connection with a country of superior industrial condition and habits.¹

"If any one doubts," says an eminent Scotchman, "of the wretchedness of an unequal and unincorporating alliance, of the degradation of being subject to a provincial Parliament and a distant King, and of the efficacy of a substantial union in curing all these evils, he is invited to look to the obvious example of Scotland. When the crowns only were united, and the governments continued separate, the weaker country was the scene of the most atrocious cruelties, the most violent injustice, and the most degrading oppressions. The prevailing religion of the people was proscribed and persecuted, with a ferocity greater than has ever been systematically exercised, even in Ireland; her industry was crippled and depressed by unjust and intolerable restrictions; her parliaments corrupted and overawed into the degraded instruments of a distant court; and her nobility and gentry, cut off from all hope of distinction by vindicating the rights, or promoting the interests, of their country at home, were led to look up to the favor of her oppressors as the only remaining avenue to power, and degenerated, for the most part, into a band of mercenary adventurers, the more considerable aspiring to the wretched honor of executing the orders which were dictated from the south, and the rest acquiring gradually those habits of

¹ Edinburgh Review, Oct. 1827.

subserviency and selfish submission, the traces of which are by some supposed to be yet discernible in their descendants. The Revolution, which rested almost entirely on the prevailing antipathy to Popery, required, of course, the co-operation of all classes of Protestants; and, by its success, the Scottish Presbyterians were relieved, for a time, from their Episcopalian persecution. But it was not till after the union that the nation was truly emancipated, or lifted up from the abject condition of a dependent, at once suspected and despised. The effects of that happy consolidation were not, indeed, *immediately* apparent; for the vices which had been generated by a century of provincial misgovernment, the meannesses that had become habitual, the animosities that had so long been fostered, could not be cured at once by the mere removal of their cause. The generation they had degraded must first be allowed to die out, and more perhaps than one generation; but the poison-tree was cut down, the fountain of bitter waters was sealed up, and symptoms of returning vigor and happiness were perceived. Vestiges may still be traced, perhaps, of our long degradation; but, for forty years back, the provinces of Scotland have been, on the whole, but the northern provinces of Great Britain. There are no local oppressions, no national animosities. Life and liberty and property are as secure in Caithness as they are in Middlesex, industry as much encouraged, and wealth still more rapidly progressive; while, not only different religious opinions, but different religious establishments, subsist in the two ends of the same island, in unbroken harmony, and only excite each other by a friendly emulation to greater purity of life, and greater zeal for Christianity. If this happy union, however, had been delayed for another century; if Scotland had been doomed to submit for a hundred years more to the provincial tyranny of the Lauderdales, Rotheses, and Middletons, and to meet the cruel persecutions which gratified the ferocity of her Dalzells and Drummonds, and tarnished the glories of such men as Montrose and Dundee, with her armed conventicles and covenanted saints militant; to see her patriots exiled, or bleeding on the scaffold; her teachers silenced in her churches and schools, and her courts of justice degraded or overawed into the instruments of a cowardly oppression,—can any man doubt, not only that she would have presented, at this day, a scene of even greater misery and discord than Ireland did in 1800; but that the corruptions and animosities by which she had been desolated would have been found to have struck so deep root as still to encumber the land, long after their seed had ceased to be scattered abroad on its surface, and only to hold out the hope of their eradication after many years of patient and painful exertion?"

In the Irish case, England had indeed much, very much, to answer for in not having immediately and strenuously given the fullest possible effect to the union; in having continued the disabilities of the Catholics, and in still maintaining a Church establishment useless and hateful to seven-eighths of the Irish people. But, by means of the union, agriculture was improving in Ireland, and manufactures were advancing every year. Throughout the north, life, liberty, and property were secure to a degree never known before. The whole island had begun to be governed by the wisdom and impartial rule of the British government, instead of by turbulent native factions; and now a way was, however late, freely opened into the imperial legislature. What a benefactor would O'Connell have been to his country, if he had now used patriotically the rights so hardly gained! If he, and the Irish members he had brought into the legislature with him, had used their imperial rights for the thorough realization of the union, their country might by this time have been, not prosperous and peaceful and satisfied, — for her troubles could not be annihilated so speedily, — but advancing towards such a condition. He, and he alone, could control the impatient Irish temper; he set himself diligently to exasperate it. He could have won the peasantry to industry and conscientious thrift; he drew them off studiously from their labors to roam the country in attendance on his political agitation. He could have united their wills and voices in a calm and effectual remonstrance against their remaining wrongs, and demand for rights yet due; but he bade them spurn the benefits granted, and taught them to put a foul construction on every act of the government and people of which they were now a part, and trained them to a passionate contempt and hatred of the law, which was all they had to look to for security and social existence. To all this he added that worst and ultimate act of promising to those who would believe him, the repeal, and the speedy repeal, of the union; well knowing that that repeal was rendered impossible by the united will and judgment of England, Scotland, and the most enlightened and influential part of Ireland. He promised a federal allegiance to the British sovereign, who would not receive such a partial and pernicious allegiance. He promised a Parliament in Dublin, where parliaments had never been any thing but assemblages of jobbers and faction leaders. He promised Irish laws, while corrupting the people out of any capacity for obedience to law at all. He promised the exclusion of British commerce, while without British commerce the Irish could not live. He promised every thing he could not perform, and that no sane and shrewd man — and O'Connell was sane and shrewd — would have performed, if he could; and every thing which could most effectually draw off the

vast multitudes of the Catholic peasantry of Ireland from the remedy of their social hardships, from the duty to their own households, and their welfare in the state. Whether he gained any objects by threatening and annoying the governments of his day, we may see hereafter. Whether he and his companions in the legislature might not have gained more by honest political endeavors, — gained more even in definite achievements, as well as in personal and national character, and in British sympathy for Ireland, — there can be no question. Thus early, however, in the summer and autumn of 1830, O'Connell exhibited the programme of his political course. One of the troubles of the Wellington Ministry during this October was the state of Ireland, where the magistrates of Tipperary were obliged to apply for military force to put down outrage; where one repeal association after another was prohibited by the Viceroy, the people believing their liberties assailed in each case; and where O'Connell — on all other occasions the partisan of the Bourbons — bade the people look to the revolutions of France and Belgium for examples what to do, and counselled a run on the banks throughout Ireland, in order to show government the danger of resisting their demands.

Nearer home, too, a strange, new trouble was arising, which it was extremely difficult to cope with. A year or two before this time, English gentry had been holding up hands and eyes at the atrocious barbarism of the peasantry in the north of France, who burned corn-ricks in the night. People observed to one another on the awful state of stupidity and malice in which any society must be sunk where such a crime could spread; a crime so foolish, so suicidal, as well as malicious! What could induce a peasantry to destroy their own food? What a set of idiots they must be! But, as soon as the dark, long nights of October and November came on, the same thing was happening in our agricultural counties, and particularly in Kent. The mystery appears never to have been completely explained. Here and there, perhaps, was seen some skulker, — some shabby stranger, wandering about in copses, and behind enclosures, or hiding in sheds, or dropping into the public-house, all ear and no tongue, or patting farm boys and girls on the back, and having confidences with them. Such people were seen here and there; and there were several instances in which young persons on trial for incendiarism accused the principal witness of having enticed them to do the act, and then got the reward by informing against them. But, if these things were true, they do not account for the origin of the practice. There was considerable distress, but not nearly so pressing or threatening as during two or three preceding years. There was, as there always

is among an ignorant population, some discontent with machinery ; but it did not appear that the farmers who used machinery were more pursued by the incendiary than others. It was probably from all these causes in turn, from some imported knowledge of what had been done in France, and from that never-failing propensity in human nature, by which extraordinary crimes — crimes which produce vast effect by a rapid and easy act, gratifying the relish for power in an untrained mind — spread like a fashion of a season ; but, however it was, that autumn was a memorable time to all who lived in the southern agricultural counties of England. The farmers and their families had no comfort in their lives. All day they looked with unavoidable suspicion upon the most ill-conditioned of their neighbors, and on every stranger who came into the parish. All night, they were wakeful ; either acting as patrols, or looking out towards the stack-yards, or listening for the rumble of the fire-engine. Those who were fully insured did not like the idea of fire close to the dwelling-house ; and there were some serious doubts about the stability of some of the insurance offices, under a pressure for which no prudence could have provided. The farmers who were not insured need not think of it ; for no offices would do new business, on any terms that farmers could offer, during the rick-burning period. If a man, weary with patrolling for three or four nights, hoped for a night's sleep, and went, the last thing, to his rick-yard, and explored every corner, and visited every shed on his premises, he might find his chamber illuminated by his burning ricks, by the time he could get up stairs. If the patrol, after a similar search, looked round as they shut the gate, some one of them asked what that blue speck in the air was ; and, before he could be answered, a blue flame would run, rocket-like, along the ridge of a stack, and down its sides, and in one minute the farm-house windows would be glittering, and the sheds would seem to come out into the yellow light, and the pond would be burnished, and all darkness would be suddenly annihilated, except in the shadows cast by the mounting and spreading flames. How it was done was never learned. Some believed that a particular stack in a yard was previously wetted with some liquid that would blaze up with a spark ; and so few persons were apprehended in the very act, or under very strong suspicion, that it was a widely spread belief that some kindling substance was directed upon the prepared stack from a distance. Several persons declared, and were more or less believed, that they saw the blue spark traverse the air, and descend ; and, now and then, a long slender wire was said to be found among the ashes. A considerable number of persons saw the fire begin before their very eyes, without being able to discover traces

of trespassers. This was naturally a time for malicious or encroaching persons to send threatening letters; and for foolish jesters to play off practical jokes; and for timid persons to take needless alarms; and for all the discontented to make the most of their grievances; and a dreary season of apprehension indeed it was. It is memorable even to those who lived in towns, and conducted no business, and had no enemies, and feared no evil for themselves. It was a great shock to such to find themselves living in a state of society where such things could be. In Kent, there were gibbets erected on Penenden Heath, and bodies swung there in the December winds, — bodies of “boys about eighteen or nineteen years old, but looking much younger;” brothers, who had said to each other, on arriving at the spot, and seeing the gallows, “That looks an awful thing.”¹ And, from Kent, the deadly fashion spread into Hampshire, Wiltshire, Buckinghamshire, Sussex, and Surrey. The military were harrassed with fruitless marches, their nightly path lighted by fires from behind, whichever way they turned. Large rewards were offered, — 500*l.* for a single conviction; and these rewards were believed to have been now and then obtained by the instigators, while the poor tools were given over to destruction. A special commission was ordered to proceed into the shires where this kind of outrage abounded; and the subject was one of several unwelcome topics in the King’s speech in November.

The opening of this Parliament was awaited throughout the country with anxious expectation. In September, when tidings of new continental revolutions were arriving, almost day by day, the funds fell; and what Lord Eldon and the ministers called “London,” — that is, the aristocracy with whom they had intercourse, and who remained clustered together in the metropolis in a very unusual manner, — was in gloomy apprehension of the fall of the monarchy; not because there were any threatenings of the monarchy, public or private, but because other monarchies were falling. The aristocracy shook their heads over the free-and-easy sayings and doings of the new Sailor-king. “I hear,” wrote Lord Eldon,² “that the condescensions of the King are beginning to make him unpopular. In that station, such familiarity must produce the destruction of respect. If the people don’t continue to think a king somewhat more than a man, they will soon find out that he is not an object of that high respect which is absolutely necessary to the utility of his character.” It may be doubted whether anybody in England was at that time saying any thing more injurious to monarchy than this. Lord Eldon, however, did what he could towards preserving the monarchy, by rebuking the King for improper

¹ Annual Register, 1830, Chron. p. 201. ² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 117.

condescension. The anecdote is an interesting one, as presenting both these old men—so perfectly unlike each other—in a favorable light. Lord Eldon¹ went up with the Bishop of Bristol to present an address. As Lord Eldon was retiring, the King stopped him, and said, “My lord, political parties and feelings have run very high, and I am afraid I have made observations upon your lordship which now”——. Here Lord Eldon interrupted him, and said, “I entreat Your Majesty’s pardon: a subject must not hear the language of apology from the lips of his sovereign;” and then the dutiful subject passed out from the presence of his rebuked King. If the Tories were right in supposing the existence of the monarchy to depend in any considerable degree on the personal reserve and dignity of the sovereign, it was assuredly very unsafe under the open-hearted Sailor-king.

This same “London” believed in October, that, in consequence of the removal of Mr. Huskisson, negotiations were going on between the Ministry and “Palmerston and Co.,” the survivors of the “Canningites,” but on a footing which yielded far too much to the requisitions of this remnant of a party; on the footing of pledges for some kind of parliamentary reform,—which could hardly have been true,—some measure about tithes, and some close dealing with the civil list. Whether these reports had any foundation or not, they are of importance to us now, as showing that the great Tory world of London was prepared for some assertion of the necessity of these measures, and would not have been surprised if they had been brought forward by the Duke himself. When night closed in on the 1st of November, nobody knew, except those who were seated round the tables of the ministers, what the disclosures of the speech were to be next day. For five days the swearing-in of members of Parliament had been going on; but the session was not opened till the 2d of November.

When the speech was promulgated, it was found to be the most offensive that had been uttered by any British monarch since the Revolution. Now, indeed, unless it could presently be shown that the King had been made a tool of by his ministers, there might soon be some ground for the Tory apprehensions about the unpopularity of the sovereign. Except a surrender of the civil list to the consideration of Parliament, and a recommendation to provide a regency in case of his death, there was no topic which gratified the expectation of the people. There was much regret at the disturbed state of Europe; determination to uphold the treaties by which the political system of Europe had been established; indignation, contempt, and horror, about disturbances in England and Ireland; a pledge to use all

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 113.

the powers of law and constitution to put down and punish such disturbance; and a lecture on the supreme happiness of those who live under British institutions.¹ While men were gathering together in streets and public buildings to discuss this speech, the turbulent in exasperation at its insolence, and the thoughtful in regret at its hardness, the Prime Minister settled every thing — the fate of his government, and the course of public affairs for years to come — by a few sentences in the opening debate, which made some people ask whether he had lost his senses, while they revived the Tory party with hopes that some hidden resources of power existed to justify the apparent rashness. In the debate on the address, the Duke of Wellington uttered that celebrated declaration against reform in Parliament, which immediately overthrew his power at home, and his reputation as a statesman throughout the world. His personal friends have since accounted for the apparent madness of uttering those words at that moment, by saying that it was a mistake owing to his deafness; and this is quoted as his own plea. A deafness had been long growing upon him which had now become considerable; and it was declared on his behalf, that if he had heard what had been said by men of his own party, and what was passing on the benches behind him, he would not have made such a declaration in that place and at that time, and without consultation with his colleagues. But the plea goes for nothing in his defence. It does not disapprove his ignorance — an ignorance extraordinary and culpable in a member of Administration — of the popular opinion and will; and it proves a most reprehensible carelessness, want of concert with his colleagues, and want of deference for their judgment, on a matter of supreme importance. The memorable sentences were these, uttered with the coolness and confidence with which he would have delivered a lecture on the British Constitution in a mechanics' institute:² —

“The noble earl [Grey] had alluded to the propriety of effecting parliamentary reform. . . . He had never heard or read of any measure, up to the present moment, which could in any degree satisfy his mind that the state of the representation could be improved, or be rendered more satisfactory to the country at large than at the present moment. He would not, however, at such an unseasonable time enter upon the subject, or excite discussion; but he should not hesitate to declare unequivocally what were his sentiments upon it. He was fully convinced that the country possessed at the present moment a legislature which answered all the good purposes of legislation, and this to a greater degree than any legislature ever had answered in any country whatever. He would go further, and say, that the legislature and

¹ Hansard, 3d series, i. p. 8.

² Hansard, 3d series, i. p. 52.

the system of representation possessed the full and entire confidence of the country,—deservedly possessed that confidence; and the discussions in the legislature had a very great influence over the opinions of the country. He would go still further, and say, that if at the present moment he had imposed upon him the duty of forming a legislature for any country, and particularly for a country like this, in possession of great property of various descriptions, he did not mean to assert that he could form such a legislature as they possessed now; for the nature of man was incapable of reaching such excellence at once: but his great endeavor would be to form some description of legislature which would produce the same results. The representation of the people at present contained a large body of the property of the country, and in which the landed interests had a preponderating influence. Under these circumstances, he was not prepared to bring forward any measure of the description alluded to by the noble lord. He was not only not prepared to bring forward any measure of this nature, but he would at once declare, that, as far as he was concerned, as long as he held any station in the government of the country, he should always feel it his duty to resist such measures when proposed by others.”

On that same night, Mr. Brougham gave notice in the Commons of his intention to bring forward, in a fortnight, the question of parliamentary reform. The next day, the unrepresented men of Birmingham were telling each other in the streets, that the Prime Minister of the country had declared that the representation could not be improved; and perhaps some traveller, on his way from Marlborough to Salisbury, gazing as he passed on the little mounds of Old Sarum, enclosing its few bare acres, where no living creature dwelt, would think of the two members sitting in the Commons, to represent this patch of ground, and would say to himself, with some amusement, that the Prime Minister of the country had declared that the representation could not be improved. There were thousands of inhabitants of Leeds and Manchester, sustaining hundreds of thousands of laborers,—five to one of rural laborers,—who conferred ominously on the Minister's satisfaction at the preponderance of the landed interests in the legislature. While the ferment was spreading and rising in the country, the liberal party in both Houses of Parliament were looking in a spirit of calm and confident expectation upon the struggles and difficulties of the rash and helpless Administration. Some members of the Cabinet took pains to intimate, the next night after the Duke's declaration, that he spoke for himself alone;¹ Sir George Murray owned himself in favor

¹ Hansard, i. p. 168.

of some moderate reform; Sir Robert Peel would not declare any opinion on a subject as yet wholly indefinite. In the Commons, Mr. Tennyson conjured the country to await in quiet the downfall of the Duke,¹ which was now sure to happen, and by no means to let the Duke's opinion on reform go for more than any one man's opinion was worth; and, in the Lords, the Earl of Winchilsea proposed to lay before the King the opinion of Parliament in regard to the incapacity of his ministers.² It was as yet only the 4th of November; but this was a season when hours told for days. In forty-eight hours the Duke was in the embarrassment of another scrape, in which there was so much of the ludicrous mixed up with what might have been very serious, that the subject was ever a most exasperating one to the great soldier.

In justice to him, it must be remembered how his mind had been wrought upon for some months past, in sympathy with his friend Polignac, in apprehension for that distribution of power in Europe which he had been concerned in establishing; and by the daily increasing disturbances in our rural districts, which exactly resembled those that preceded the revolution in France. It must be remembered how little he really knew the people of England; and how, to a mind like his, the mere name of revolution suggests images of regicide, and of every thing horrible,—images which were, no doubt, in his mind when he turned away, as he was seen to do, from the spectacle of the tricolor floating in the Thames. These things mark him as unfit to be the Prime Minister of England in 1830; but they soften the shame of the thought that the high courage of the great soldier sank under a senseless alarm

Alderman given by an alderman of London. This Alderman Key's panic. Key had been elected to serve the office of Lord Mayor for the coming year; and the King and Queen and the ministers were to dine with him at Guildhall on the 9th of November. On the 6th, the alderman addressed a letter to the Prime Minister, the tone and wording of which should have shown to any man of sense that it was not a communication to be acted upon, without large confirmation of its statements.³ This letter warned the Duke that a certain number of desperate characters intended to make an attack upon him near the hall; and it plainly desired that, as the civil force would not be enough for the Duke's protection, he would not come without a strong military guard. The next night, Saturday, Sir Robert Peel sent a letter to the Lord Mayor, to state that their majesties declined visiting the city on the 9th. The ministers pleaded that they had received other letters, besides that from Alderman Key; and, but for this, the case would have been much simplified: for the poor man ex-

¹ Hansard, i. p. 175.² Hansard, i. p. 198.³ Hansard, i. p. 251.

pressed, again and again, the deepest contrition for his folly in writing as he had done, when he saw how serious were the consequences of the act.¹ In the course of Sunday, a deputation from the committee of the feast waited three times on the ministers; and the Duke's declaration was that either the banquet must be postponed, or a large military force must be put in possession of the city. The banquet was postponed.

In the morning, the consternation in the city was extreme. No one knew what was the matter; but that there must be something terrible, there could be no doubt. Some said that there was to be a 5th of November on the 9th; some, that while their majesties were dining, the gas-pipes were to be cut, Temple Bar blockaded, the royal personages made prisoners, and London sacked. There was no nonsense that could not find belief on that fearful Monday, though everybody agreed that no sovereign had ever been more popular than William IV., who had not done an ungracious thing, nor spoken an ungracious word, except that speech a few days before, which everybody knew to be solely the work of his ministers. On that Monday morning, consols fell three per cent in an hour and a half; careful citizens renewed the bolts and bars of their doors, lined their shutters with iron plates, and laid in arms and ammunition, in expectation of the sacking of London. Before the end of the week, the most alarmed were laughing at the panic; but not only was the mysterious panic a fearful thing at the moment, but the natural effects were very vexatious. There was a good deal of desultory and unmeaning rioting, by such disorderly citizens as thought that, if they had the discredit, they might as well have the fun. And, worse than this, an unfounded impression went abroad through all the world, that it was not safe for the King of England to pass through the streets of his own capital, to dine with its chief magistrate.

Day by day now, it became only a question of weeks about when the Administration would go out; whether before the Christmas recess or after. Before a single week from the panic, they were out. On the 15th, Sir Henry Parnell made his promised motion for a select committee to examine the accounts connected with the civil list. The debate was not long, the ministers declaring that simplification and retrenchment had been carried as far as was possible; and the opposition desiring to have it proved whether the matter was so. On the division, the government were left in a minority of twenty-nine, in a House of 437 members. Mr. Hobhouse asked Sir Robert Peel whether the ministers would retain their seats after such a division; but he received no answer.² He was about to press the question,

¹ Annual Register, 1830, Chron. p. 187.

² Hansard, i. p. 548.

when Mr. Brougham proposed to wait till the next day for the answer, and the appointment of the committee just decided upon. The committee, however, was appointed at once; the reply was waited for. The ministers afterwards declared, that they might not have considered this division on the civil list reason enough for their resignation, by itself; but that they considered with it the probable result of Mr. Brougham's motion for parliamentary reform, which was to be debated on the night after the civil-list question.

On that evening, the 16th, the Duke of Wellington came down to announce to the Lords that his resignation of office had been presented and accepted, and that he continued in his position only till his successor should have been appointed.¹ In the other House, Sir Robert Peel made the same declaration on behalf of himself and all the other members of the Administration.

Lord Althorp immediately requested Mr. Brougham to defer his motion on parliamentary reform, which was too important to be debated while the government of the country was in an unsettled state. Mr. Brougham expressed great reluctance, and threw the responsibility upon the House of delaying the matter till the 25th; declaring that he would then bring it forward, whatever might be the condition of circumstances, and whoever might be His Majesty's ministers.² No one had any doubt about who, in the main, would be His Majesty's ministers. It was well understood that the great day was at hand when the British polity was to renew its youth and replenish its life. Some who walked homewards from their parliamentary halls to their own firesides, through the darkness of that November night, told each other that a brighter sun than that of midsummer was to arise tomorrow, encumbered and dimmed at first, probably, by clouds and vapors, but destined to send down its vital warmth and light through long vistas of remote generations.

¹ Hansard, i. p. 558.

² Hansard, i. p. 563.

CHAPTER II.

THERE was no doubt in any quarter as to who would be the new Premier, or what would be the general composition of the Ministry. The anti-Catholic party was broken up and humbled. The demand of the people for a liberal government was strong; and there was no one to say that it should not be obeyed. The King requested Lord Grey to form a government; and he agreed to do so, on condition that reform of Parliament should be made a Cabinet question; a condition immediately granted. As the news spread through the land, it excited a stronger sensation than men of a future time could perhaps be easily made to understand. The interest felt for Lord Grey was strong. Men remembered his advocacy of reform of Parliament in the last century; his patient and dignified assertion of the principle and ultimate necessity of the case during a long course of years, obscure and unprosperous for him; and the deep melancholy of his unhappy speech against Canning, three years before, when he spoke of his own political career as over, and his political loneliness as complete. Now, with more years upon his honored head, he stood at the summit of affairs, empowered to achieve with his own hand the great object of his life and time, and surrounded by comrades of his own choice and appointment. This trait of the time interested the hearts of hundreds of thousands; but to the millions there was something far more exciting still. The year which was closing was called the year One of the people's cause.

It was now fifteen years since the peace. Of these fifteen years, the first seven had been dark and troubled under a discouraging and exasperating Tory rule, during which, however, by virtue of the peace, good things were preparing for a coming time. During the last eight years, there had been vicissitudes of fortune,—some exultation and prosperity,—more depression and distress, as regarded the material condition of the people; but the country had been incomparably better governed. It was under this better government that the people had learned striking and virtuous lessons about their own power,—lessons which had prepared them to require wisely, and conduct magnanimously, the greatest revolution in the history of their country.

It was in the leisure of the new peace that a multitude of minds had received the idea, and made it their own, that the shortest and only safe way of procuring all reforms and all good government was by making the representation as true as it could be made. This became the vital principle of the political life of Great Britain, as soon as the excitements of the war died away; and it must long continue to be so. Among the many reasons which make us now and for ever deprecate war, the chief is, and should ever be, that we would not have the national mind and will called off from this great truth and aim,—that the first duty and most unremitting obligation of a people living under a representative system is to make the representation true and perfect. In this year One of the people's cause, the people were ready; and they were blessed with rulers who were willing to make a beginning so large and decided as to secure the permanence of the work, as far as they carried it, and its certain prosecution through future generations. It is nothing that they did not foresee this further prosecution, nor believe it when it was foretold to them. Great deeds naturally so fill the conceptions and sympathies of the doers, that they are—except a great philosopher here and there—finality-men; but those who are not so immediately engaged see further, and remember that sound political institutions are made perfect very slowly, and by a succession of improvements. There were many, therefore, who in that day of exultation saw more cause for rejoicing than did those who were proudest of the immediate triumph. They saw in the parliamentary reform of Lord Grey a noble beginning of a great work which it might take centuries to perfect, and in every stage of which the national mind would renew its strength, and gain fresh virtue and wisdom. They appreciated the greatness of the first effort, by which the impediments to true representation were to be removed, and some steps taken towards a recognition of the vast commercial interests which had risen up in modern times; but they saw that the due equalization of the landed and commercial interests, and the true proportion of the representation of property and numbers, could not be attained at a stroke, and that much of the noble work of parliamentary reform must remain to occupy and exalt future generations. The wisest and the most eager, however, the oldest and the youngest, desired nothing more than what they now saw,—their nation, as a whole, demanding and achieving its own self-improvement, instead of ringing bells and firing cannon about bloody victories obtained in the cause of foreign governments.

It was news enough for one day, that this great era was opening, and that Lord Grey stood on the threshold. By the next day, the people were eager to know who were to be his helpers.

The newspapers could not give the list of the Ministry fast enough. In reading-rooms, and at the corners of streets, merchants, bankers, and tradesmen took down the names, and carried them to their families, reading them to every one they met by the way: while poor men who could not write, carried them well enough in their heads; for most of the leading names were of men known to such of the laboring class as understood their own interest in the great cause just coming on.

Next on the list to Lord Grey was Lord Althorp, as Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was known as an advocate of the ballot; as having been forward in questions of retrenchment and reform; and as being a man, if of no eminent vigor, of great benevolence, and an enthusiastic love of justice. His abilities as a statesman were now to be tried. Mr. Brougham's name came next. He was to be Lord Chancellor. It was amusing to see how that announcement was everywhere received with a laugh; in most cases, with a laugh which he would not have objected to, — a laugh of mingled surprise, exultation, and amusement. The anti-reformers laughed scornfully, — dwelling upon certain declarations of his against taking office, and upon his incompetency as an equity lawyer; facts which he would not himself have disputed, but which his party thought should be put aside by the pressure of the time. To his worshippers there was something comic in the thought of his vitality fixed down upon the wool-sack, under the compression of the Chancellor's wig. Some expected a world of amusement in seeing how he got on in a position so new; how the wild and mercurial Harry Brougham would comport himself among the peers, and as the head of the law. Some expected from him the realization of all that he had declared ought to be done by men in power; and, as the first and most certain boon, a scheme of national education which he would carry with all the power of his office and his pledged political character. Others sighed while they smiled; sighed to give up the popular member for Yorkshire, and feared that his country had had the best of him. Lord Lansdowne, the President of the Council, was held in a quiet, general respect. Lord Durham, the John George Lambton who had ever fought the people's battle well, was hailed with great warmth. He was Lord Privy Seal. There were some "Canningites," who were received with goodwill, without much expectation. Charles Grant, President of the Board of Control; Lord Palmerston, Foreign Secretary; Lord Melbourne, Home Secretary; and Lord Goderich, as Colonial Secretary. The only anti-Catholic and anti-reform member of the Cabinet was the Duke of Richmond, who was Postmaster-general. How he found himself there was a subject of speculation on all hands. The other members of the Cabinet were Sir

James Graham, at the Admiralty; Lord Auckland, at the Mint, and Board of Trade; and Lords Holland and Carlisle. Out of the Cabinet, there were the names, among others, of Lord John Russell, pledged to parliamentary reform; Mr. Charles Poulett Thomson, pledged to repeal of the corn-laws; and Sir Thomas Denman and Sir William Horne, as Attorney and Solicitor-general. Lord Anglesey was again Viceroy of Ireland, and Lord Plunket the Irish Lord Chancellor. The Chief Secretary for Ireland was Mr. Stanley. Such was the government about to conduct the great organic change in the British Constitution which the anti-reformers were still resolved should never take place.

There was a suspension of business in Parliament while the re-election of some of the ministers went on. One defeat was ludicrous enough. Mr. Stanley, the heir of the house of Derby, was thrown out at Preston by Henry Hunt, who was not yet, it thus appears, seen through by all his followers as by Bamford.

The first business to be proceeded with was the Regency Bill, which had already been delayed too long. By this Bill it was provided, that, in case of the birth of a posthumous child of the King's, the Queen should be Regent during the minority. In the other case, the Duchess of Kent was to be Regent, if the Princess Victoria should come to the throne during her minority; unless, indeed, the Duchess should marry a foreigner.¹

Lord Wynford proposed a grant of additional powers to the magistracy in the disturbed districts, where matters were going on from bad to worse; but the ministers declared that the existing powers of the law were sufficient, if duly put in force: but they did not conceal their opinion that a more active and sensible set of men might be brought into the commission of the peace.² How serious was the aspect of the times, we find by the gazetting of an order in council, that the Archbishop of Canterbury should prepare a prayer for relief from social disturbance; which prayer was to be read in all the Episcopal churches and chapels of England and Scotland.³

In the Commons a select committee was appointed, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to inquire what reductions could be made in the salaries and emoluments of offices held by members of either House of Parliament during the pleasure of the Crown. This was a graceful beginning of the business of retrenchment by the ministers,—this offer to reduce, in the first place, their own salaries. As the new Administration had much to do in preparing, during the recess, the great measures to which they were pledged, they moved for

¹ Annual Register, 1830, p. 165

² Hansard, i. p. 676.

³ Annual Register, Chron. p. 209.

a long interval, and Parliament was adjourned to the 3d of February, 1831.¹

At the close of this year One of the people's cause, there was as much disturbance in Ireland as if the government in London had been composed of the rankest anti-Catholics. O'Connell set himself up against Lord Anglesey; organized insults to him on his arrival; encouraged tumultuous processions and meetings, by which he was himself to be thanked for his advocacy of repeal of the union; and put out addresses, in defiance and reply to the proclamations of the Viceroy, the whole tenor of which was to rouse the strong passions of the Irish artisans and peasants against the government, the law, and the imperial connection, from which, at this juncture, so many benefits might be expected.² His interspersed exhortations were to observe the law: his influence went to excite that fever of the mind which is sure to throw off law, sooner or later; and thus inauspiciously began the new reign of the popular Viceroy, Lord Anglesey.

By this time the dread of something more awful than Irish disturbance and Kentish rick-burning was stealing into the heart of the nation. All reports of the Asiatic cholera, which Englishmen had listened to, had been to their ears and imaginations like the accounts which have come down to us of the desolating plagues of the middle ages, — something horrible to conceive of, but nothing to be afraid of, as if it could ever reach us.³ But now it was known — known by orders of the Privy Council — that the plague had spread from Asia into Europe, and was travelling north-westwards, exactly in the direction of our islands. All that was at present proposed was an attention to the quarantine laws; but the imagination of the people naturally went further than the letters of the Privy Council. If George IV. and the Wellington Ministry had lived through the year, its close would have been a season of almost unequalled gloom. But the nation now had an honest-hearted and unselfish King, a popular Ministry, and a prospect of immeasurable political benefits. So that it was in a mood, on the whole, of hope and joy that they saw the expiration of the year One of the people's cause.

¹ Hansard, i. p. 932.

² Annual Register, 1830, Chron. pp. 208–213.

³ Annual Register, 1830, Chron. p. 160.

CHAPTER III.

THE year 1831 opened gloomily. Those who believed that revolution was at hand, feared to wish one another a happy new year; and the anxiety about revolution was by no means confined to anti-reformers. Society was already in a discontented and tumultuous state,—its most ignorant portion being acted upon at once by hardship at home, and example from abroad; and there was every reason to expect a deadly struggle before parliamentary reform could be carried. The ignorant and misled among the peasantry and artisans looked upon the French and other revolutions as showing that men had only to take affairs into their own hands, in order to obtain whatever they wanted; and, Popular in their small way, they took matters into their own discontents. hands. Machine-breaking went on to such an extent, that men were tried for the offence in groups of twelve or twenty at a time; and the January nights were lighted up by burning barns and ricks, as the preceding months had been. On the 3d of January, a Manchester manufacturer was murdered in a manner which gave a shock to the whole kingdom. He left his father's house to go to the mill, in the evening, when it was dark; he was brought home dead within ten minutes, shot through the heart, in the lane, by one of three men who were lying in wait for him. The significance of the case lay in the circumstance that it was a murder from revenge, occasioned by a quarrel about the trade-union. There was fear lest the practice should spread; lest every manufacturer who refused to employ men belonging to a trade-union — and there were many such — should be liable to be picked off by an assassin, appointed by lot to be the instrument of the vengeance of his union.¹ A reward of 1000*l.* for the detection of the murderer was offered by the Secretary of State, and another 1000*l.* by the father and family of the victim; but no clue was obtained at the time, nor for some years afterwards.

As for the dangers which might follow upon the action of government on the great question, the coolest heads had the strongest sense of them. The apprehensions of the anti-reformers were all about the consequences of the

¹ Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 6.

Reform Bill, if carried. The apprehensions of the most thoughtful reformers were of the perils attending its passage. On a superficial view it might appear that the result was so certain, that the way could not be much embarrassed; but there was not only the anti-reforming aristocracy to be encountered on the one hand, but large masses of malcontents on the other. In the estimate of the anti-reform forces might be included,—possibly, under certain circumstances,—the sovereign; certainly, the House of Peers,—almost a whole House of Peers, made desperate, not only by fear of loss of political power, but by spoliation of what they considered their lawful, and a wholly inestimable, property; next, the aristocracy in the House of Commons and out of it, who had influence and property of the same kind at stake; and, lastly, the whole body of Toryism in England,—a party never small, and at this time made particularly active and desperate by a sincere belief that the constitution was likely to be overthrown, and that the English nation would presently be living under mob-rule. Large numbers of this party, who had not the remotest interest in borough property, were as fierce against the reform measure as the Peers themselves, from this tremendous fear. There was quite as much folly among the lowest classes on the other side. The hungry and the desperately ignorant, who are always eager for change, because they may gain, and cannot lose, believed that parliamentary reform would feed and clothe them, and bring work and good wages, and a removal of all the taxes. It was too probable that a protracted opposition would raise these poor people in riot, and turn the necessary revolution, from being a peaceable one, into an overthrow of law and order. It is necessary to take note of this state of things, in order to understand and appreciate the action of the middle classes during the two following years.

While the ministers were hard at work, preparing their mighty measure, the middle classes were preparing for their support. The action of the non-electors during this month of January was as powerful a satire on the then existing system of representation as could have been displayed. The vast populations of Leeds, Birmingham, and Manchester, and countless hosts of intelligent and enlightened tradesmen and artisans elsewhere, sent shoals of petitions to Parliament for a reform of the House of Commons; and they did something more effectual by forming political unions, or preparing for their immediate formation, in case of need. This was the force which kept the peace, and preserved us from disastrous revolution. These people knew what they were about, and they went calmly to their work. Of course, the anti-reformers complained of compulsion, of extorted consent, of

unconstitutional forces being put in action. This was true, since they themselves compelled the compulsion, and called out the unconstitutional forces. There was no question about the fact, but only about the justification of it. No one denies that occasions may and do occur when the assertion of a nation's will against either a corrupt government or a tyrannical party is virtuous, and absolutely required by patriotic duty. The fearful and trying question is, when this ought to be done, and how men are to recognize the true occasion when it comes. There probably never was an occasion when the duty was more clear than now. The sovereign and his ministers were on the side of the people: and if the opposing party should prove disloyal to sovereign and people, for the sake of their own political power and mercenary interests; if they held out till the one party or the other must yield, — it was for the interest of peace, law, order, loyalty, and the permanence of the constitution, that the class most concerned — the orderly middle class, who had the strongest conceivable stake in the preservation of law and peace — should overstep the bounds of custom, and occupy a debatable land of legality, in support of the majority of the government and the nation. They felt that they occupied the strong central position, whereby they upheld the patriotic government above them, and repressed the eager, untaught, and impoverished multitude below them; and they saw that whatever might best secure the completion of the act which must now be carried through, they must do. They therefore prepared themselves for all consequences of their determination that parliamentary reform should take place. Some formed themselves into political unions; some held themselves ready to do so, if need should arise; all made a more rapid progress in political knowledge and thought than they could perhaps have antecedently supposed possible in the time: when the period of struggle arrived, they did their duty magnificently; and their conduct stands for ever before the world, a model of critical political action, and a ground of confidence in the political welfare of England in all future times.

When the Houses re-assembled, on the 3d of February, Lord Grey made the expected declaration that a measure of Ministerial declaration. parliamentary reform was in readiness to be brought forward in the other House.¹ He intimated that the work had been laborious, and in its first stages difficult; but that it had been the desire of the ministers to prepare a scheme "which should be effective without exceeding the bounds of a just and well-advised moderation;" and that they had succeeded to their wish, — the whole government being unanimous in their adoption of the measure, as an exponent of their principle and aim. When

¹ Hansard, ii. p. 118.

Lord John Russell afterwards brought the measure forward, he declared the whole scheme to be Lord Grey's; and there was assuredly no mind in England which had more earnestly, or for more years, meditated the subject. The execution was universally understood to have been confided in chief to Lord Durham; and there was assuredly no heart more in the work, or more true to the principles of popular freedom. The profoundest secrecy was observed as to the scope and details of the measure, to the very last moment. It was of great consequence that it should be so, in order that the eager friends and foes of the measure should not rush into conflict on any misunderstanding or fragmentary knowledge. The very few persons who were necessarily admitted to the confidence of the government felt this confidence to be a heavy burden. One, deeply engaged and hard-worked, said afterwards that he was almost afraid to sleep, lest he should dream and speak of what his mind was full of. The great day of disclosure was the 1st of March, when Lord John Russell had the honor—though not a ^{Bill brought forward.} Cabinet Minister, but on account of his long advocacy of the cause—of bringing forward the measure in the Commons. On that day, the friends of the Ministry had dinner-parties, where the guests sat watching the clock, and waiting for tidings. The Lord Chancellor had promised the hostess of one of these parties, that no one should be earlier served with the news than she; and anxiously she sat, at the head of her table, till the packet was brought in which the Lord Chancellor had despatched, the moment he found that Lord John Russell had begun his speech. As she read aloud, exclamations of surprise at the scope of the scheme burst forth. And so it was all over the kingdom. During the recess, some of the liberal papers had conjured the people to receive thankfully whatever measure the ministers might offer, and be assured that, however inadequate, they could not have more. Other papers had been more true to their duty, exhorting the people to take nothing less than the whole of what they demanded. If they understood their principle, and were earnest in their demand, they ought not to yield an inch of their ground. It now appeared that there was no faltering on the part of the ministers; no desire that the people should surrender an inch of their ground. They knew that there could be no half-and-half dealing with boroughmongery. It was a vice which must be extinguished, and not an indulgence which might be gradually weakened. By this Bill, the practice of boroughmongery was cut up by the roots. This was the essential feature of the measure. Whether the further reforms advocated were complete or inadequate, this opened the way to all else. "Like Sinbad," as was said at the time, "we have first to dash from our

shoulders the 'Old Man of the Sea,' and afterwards to complete our deliverance."¹ It will afterwards appear how partial was the representation proposed to be given, and how inadequate and faulty were the constructive arrangements. But there were not two opinions at the time as to the ministers having gone further than anybody expected, and proposed a measure which could never be withdrawn without a deadly struggle, nor stand without becoming a dividing-line between the old history of England and the new.

It was a great night,—that night of the 1st of March, 1831,—when for the first time a response was heard from within the vitiated House to the voice of intelligence without. (This House had long been the property or the tool of powers and parties adverse to the general weal. While the world without had been growing wiser and more enlightened in political principle, this assembly had made no progress, or had deteriorated, till the voice of general intelligence had given it unmistakable warning that it must either reform itself or succumb.) The last and effectual warning was the demand of an Administration which should invite the House of Commons to reform itself; and here, at least, on this memorable night, was the response—the answering hail—for which the stretched ear of the vigilant nation was listening, to the furthest boundary of the empire. While the occasion appeared thus serious to those who brought it about, there were listeners, and not a few, in the House, that night, who could not receive Lord John Russell's exposition otherwise than as an audacious jest.² Others came away at the end, and said they could give no clear account of it; and that there was no need, as ministers could have no other intention than to render office untenable for those who must presently succeed them. Thus blind were the anti-reformers, after all the long and threatening warnings they had received. But a few hours opened their eyes. The morning newspapers exhibited the scheme, with all its royal and ministerial sanctions; and that which appeared a jest the night before was now pronounced a revolution.

The proper occasion for giving a specific account of the Reform Act will be when its provisions were finally settled. It may suffice now to say, that, in the words of Lord Grey, "representation, not nomination, is the principle of the Reform Bill;" that, in pursuance of this principle, sixty "rotten boroughs" were deprived of the franchise; and 168 borough seats were abolished. A few small boroughs were retained—to the dissatisfaction of reformers generally—for the purpose of admitting an order of members not likely to be returned for large towns or counties, and providing for some little representation of the small-borough

¹ Seven Administrations, ii. p. 84.

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 123.

class of citizens. The reformers were also sorry that fifty-four members were given to counties which had hitherto been opposed to popular interests; and the stopping-short at the representation of the middle classes was disapproved by a multitude in the middle and upper classes, as much as by the excluded artisans themselves. Wise statesmen and observers know well, that the strongest conservative power of a country like ours resides in the holders of the smallest properties. However much the nobleman may be attached to his broad lands and his mansions and parks, and the middle-class manufacturer or professional man to the station and provision he has secured for his family, this attachment is weak, this stake is small, in comparison with those of the artisan who tastes the first sweets of property in their full relish. He is the man to contend to the last gasp for the institutions of his country, and for the law and order which secure to him what he values so dearly. The commonest complaint of all, made by the restless and discontented spirits of any time, is that their former comrades become "spoiled" from the moment they rise into the possession of any ease, property, or social advantage; and they do truly thus become "spoiled" for any revolutionary or disorderly purpose. By all to whom this fact was clear, it was thought a mistake to have stopped at the proposed point in the communication of the franchise; but they knew that it was an error which might and would be corrected in a future time, and were content to wait. They saw how the clumsy ancient methods of conducting political affairs, in the rough, as it were, at the bidding of a few individual wills, were giving way to the more comprehensive, refined, and precise methods of government by representation; and that, when this new philosophical practice had gone somewhat further, the value of the artisan class, as the nicest of political barometers, would be practically acknowledged. To them, to their union of popular intelligence and strong love of property, would rulers and all propertied classes hereafter look for the first warnings of approaching disturbance, the earliest breathings of conservative caution; and to representatives of this class will a welcome assuredly be given in the councils of the nation, as our political procedure improves in elevation and refinement. The reduction of the number of members of the Commons was not at first objected to on any hand. As Lord John Russell observed,¹ "It is to be considered, that, when this Parliament is reformed, there will not be so many members who enter Parliament merely for the sake of the name, and as a matter of style and fashion;" not so many, he went on to say, who were travelling abroad during the whole session, or who regarded the House as a pleasant lounge, and not an arduous field of duty. The 168 dis-

¹ Hansard, ii. p. 1071.

placed members were not therefore to be succeeded by an equal number. There was to be a decrease of 62, making the total number of representatives 596. The parishes and suburbs of London were to send eight new members, and the large towns in the provinces 34; all these together not equalling the new county representation.

On the whole, it was concluded by the reform party that the measure should be received as most meritorious and sufficiently satisfactory, on account of its bold dealing with corruption, — of its making a complete clearance for further action; but that it was not a measure of radical reform.¹ As a contemporary observed, “The ground, limited as it is, which it is proposed to clear and open to the popular influence, will suffice as the spot desired by Archimedes for the plant of the power that must ultimately govern the whole system.”

It was thus that the authors of the measure expected it to be received by the reform party. In the course of the debates on the Bill in the House of Peers, Lord Sidmouth,² who supposed Lord Grey to have been carried by circumstances far beyond his original intentions, said to him, “I hope God will forgive you on account of this Bill: I don’t think I can.” To which Lord Grey replied, “Mark my words: within two years you will find that we have become unpopular, for having brought forward the most aristocratic measure that ever was proposed in Parliament.” Lord Althorp did not conceal his opinion — he avowed it — that the Reform Bill was the most aristocratic act ever offered to the nation; and the wonder is who could doubt it, while the new county representation preponderated over the addition to the towns. The inestimable virtue of the Bill — that which made it the horror of the “borough-market” men, as the Marquis of Blandford called them — was the destruction of borough property by the substitution of election for nomination.

As for the reception of the measure by its enemies, we have seen, that, when Lord John Russell opened the business, it was supposed to be a jest, or a factious manoeuvre. The staid Hansard, usually so strictly adhering to bare reporting, here gives us a passing glimpse of the aspect of the House when Lord John Russell read the list of boroughs proposed for disfranchisement. In the course of his reading, “he was frequently interrupted by shouts of laughter, cries of ‘Hear, hear!’ from members for these boroughs, and various interlocutions across the table.”³ And what was it that they were about to lose? There was a man living, speaking, and preaching, in those days, who could convey more wisdom in a jest, more pathos in a burlesque

¹ Seven Administrations, ii. p. 84.

² Life of Lord Sidmouth, iii. p. 439.

³ Hansard, ii. 1077.

sketch, than other men could impress through more ordinary forms; and he has left a picture of the "borough market," which, as the last and unsurpassed, ought to be put on permanent record:¹ "So far from its being a merely theoretical improvement, I put it to any man, who is himself embarked in a profession, or has sons in the same situation, if the unfair influence of boroughmongers has not perpetually thwarted him in his lawful career of ambition and professional emolument. 'I have been in three general engagements at sea,' said an old sailor; 'I have been twice wounded; I commanded the boats when the French frigate, the "Astrolabe," was cut out so gallantly.'—'Then you are made a post-captain?'—'No; I was very near it: but Lieutenant Thompson cut me out, as I cut out the French frigate; his father is town-clerk of the borough for which Lord F—— is member; and there my chance was finished.' In the same manner, all over England, you will find great scholars rotting on curacies,—brave captains starving in garrets,—profound lawyers decayed and mouldering in the Inns of Court, because the parsons, warriors, and advocates of boroughmongers must be crammed to saturation, before there is a morsel of bread for the man who does not sell his votes, and put his country up to auction; and, though this is of every-day occurrence, the borough system, we are told, is no practical evil. . . . But the thing I cannot, and will not, bear is this: what right has this lord, or that marquis, to buy ten seats in Parliament, in the shape of boroughs, and then to make laws to govern me? And how are these masses of power redistributed? The eldest son of my lord has just come from Eton: he knows a good deal about Æneas and Dido, Apollo and Daphne, and that is all; and to this boy his father gives a six-hundredth part of the power of making laws, as he would give him a horse, or a double-barrelled gun. Then Vellum, the steward, is put in,—an admirable man; he has raised the estates, watched the progress of the family Road and Canal Bills,—and Vellum shall help to rule over the people of Israel. A neighboring country gentleman, Mr. Plumpkin, hunts with my lord,—opens him a gate or two, while the hounds are running,—dines with my lord,—agrees with my lord,—wishes he could rival the Southdown sheep of my lord,—and upon Plumpkin is conferred a portion of the government. Then there is a distant relation of the same name, in the county militia, with white teeth, who calls up the carriage at the opera, and is always wishing O'Connell was hanged, drawn, and quartered; then a barrister, who has written an article in the 'Quarterly,' and is very likely to speak, and refute M'Culloch:

¹ Sydney Smith's Works, iii. p. 126.

and these five people, in whose nomination I have no more agency than I have in the nomination of the toll-keepers of the Bosphorus, are to make laws for me and my family,—to put their hands in my purse, and to sway the future destinies of this country; and when the neighbors step in, and beg permission to say a few words before these persons are chosen, there is a universal cry of ruin, confusion, and destruction: we have become a great people under Vellum and Plumpkin; under Vellum and Plumpkin our ships have covered the ocean; under Vellum and Plumpkin our armies have secured the strength of the Hills: to turn out Vellum and Plumpkin is not reform, but revolution.”

In recognizing the truth of this picture, and declaring that such a state of things could not have endured much longer, we must remember the cost of the breaking-up to those who nobly volunteered to do it. The framers of the Reform Bill were noblemen and gentlemen of high family, who were laying down hereditary possessions of their own, while requiring the same sacrifice from others. The borough-wealth of the Russell family was known to be enormous; yet the Duke of Bedford cheered on Lord John Russell in his task. If we read with tender admiration of loyal noblemen and gentry who brought their wealth to the feet of an unprosperous sovereign, and made themselves landless for the sake of their King, what must we feel at this great new spectacle of the privileged classes divesting themselves of privilege for the sake of the people,—for the honor and integrity of the country? It was a great deed; and posterity will ever declare it so. It is objected by some, that these peers and gentlemen were well aware, and indeed openly avowed, that they could not retain this kind of wealth, nor, perhaps, any other, if reform of Parliament were not granted: they apprehended a convulsion, and said so; declaring also that this was the reason why their reforms were made so prompt and sweeping. This is quite true; but it is precisely this which shows how superior these men were to the selfish greed which blinded the eyes of their opponents. They had open minds, clear eyes, calm consciences, and hands at the service of their country; and they therefore saw things in their true light, and turned the pressure of an irresistible necessity into a noble occasion of self-sacrifice, and disinterested care for the public weal; while the opposite order of borough-holders saw nothing, believed nothing, knew nothing, and declared nothing, but that they would not part with their hereditary property and influence. When they protested that to take away their borough property was “to destroy the aristocracy,” they passed a severer satire upon their order than could have been invented by any enemy. If the aristocracy of England could not subsist but upon a rotten-

borough foundation, it was indeed a different order from that which the world had, for many centuries, supposed; but no one could look upon the dignified head of the Prime Minister, or the countenances of his self-sacrificing comrades in the House of Peers, without feeling that the world was right, and that those who said any thing so derogatory to the aristocratic tenure in England were basely and sordidly wrong. Lord Eldon was one of these; and in his speech at the Pitt Club, supposing that point granted, he went on to his view of the consequences; in the course of which we find him, who ought to have known better, falling into the vulgar error of the aristocracy, of supposing only one class of society to exist below that wealthy one with which they are compelled by their affairs to have business. Lord Eldon, like others who must know better, included under one head ("the lower classes") everybody below the wealthiest bankers, — manufacturers, tradesmen, artisans, laborers, and paupers; as we now and then hear fine people confusing the claims of great capitalists and humble cottagers, announcements in town-hall meetings and gossip in servants' halls. Lord Eldon must have known, but he seems to have forgotten, that there is a large proportion of society composed of the ignorant and hopeless classes, lying below the rank from which he rose; yet this is the representation he gives of the happy state of the English people which was to be broken up by the Reform Bill, through its destruction of the aristocracy. "The aristocracy once destroyed," he declared to his brother Pittites, "the best supporters of the lower classes would be swept away. In using the term 'lower classes,' he meant nothing offensive. How could he do so? He himself had been one of the lower classes. He gloried in the fact; and it was noble and delightful to know that the humblest in the realm might, by a life of industry, propriety, and good moral and religious conduct, rise to eminence. All could not become eminent in public life, — that was impossible; but every man might arrive at honor, independence, and competence."

What? — every man? — he whose early years are spent in opening and shutting a door in a coal-pit; who does not know his own name, and never heard of God? — or any one of thousands of hand-loom weavers, who swallow opium on Saturday nights, to deaden the pains of hunger on Sundays? — or the Dorsetshire laborer, whose only prospect is that his eight shillings a week may be reduced to seven, and the seven to six, but never that his wages may rise? May "every man" of these arrive at honor, independence, and competence? Truly, Lord Eldon did his best to prove how sorely these "lower classes" needed some kind of representation in Parliament, or at least the admission of some who might make known their existence and their claims.

The debate which followed the introduction of the Reform Bill extended over seven nights, between seventy and eighty members delivering their views in the course of that time. The adversaries of the measure argued on grounds more contradictory than are often exhibited, even on great occasions like the present. Some cried out that democracy was henceforth in the ascendant, while others were full of indignation that the qualification was raised, and so many poor freemen disfranchised. Some complained of the qualification as too low, and others as too high. Some insinuated pity for the sovereign, as overborne by factious ministers; others were disgusted at the parade of the King's sanction, and intimated that it was nothing to them what the King thought. Of all the objections uttered, none rose higher in matter or tone than a deprecation of change in a country which had been so great under the old laws; and a remonstrance against lessening the proportionate power of the House of Lords.

On the side of the measure, there was a brief statement of objections on the score of deficiency; but an agreement to work cordially for the Bill as it was offered, in the hope of supplying its deficiencies afterwards. Many would have desired an extension of the franchise downwards, as well as upwards and laterally, as was now provided by the removal of many restrictions. Yet more had hoped for the ballot, to purify the elections, and for a shortening of the duration of parliaments. But all agreed to relinquish their minor objects for the time, to secure the overthrow of borough corruption; and the great cry was agreed upon which from that hour rang through the land for above a year, "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill."

There was to be no division on the first reading. Neither party seemed disposed to bring the matter to any test so soon; the ministers apprehending being left in a minority, and their opponents not being yet combined for an organized resistance. The Bill was read a first time on the 14th of March.

And now began the great stir among the middle classes which kept the country for nearly two years in a state which was called revolutionary, and with justice; but which showed with how little disturbance of the public peace that prodigious growth of political sentiment can take place which is the resulting benefit of a principled revolution. At each stage of the business, there was some disorder, and much noble manifestation of intelligence and will. Illuminations were called for foolishly at times, and windows broken,—especially at Edinburgh in the course of this spring. Lists of placemen and pensioners, containing incorrect items and invidious statements, were handed

about at a season when it was dangerous to inflame the popular mind against an aristocracy already too much vituperated. Many of the newspapers were not only violent on their own side, but overbore all rights of opinion on the other, as insufferably as the rankest of the Tory journals; and, naturally enough, a multitude of the ignorant believed that all the taxes would be taken off, and that every man would have the independence and competence that Lord Eldon talked about, if the Reform Bill passed, and regarded accordingly those who stood between them and the Bill. These were the sins and follies of the time; and it is marvellous that they were no worse.

Some will ask even now, and many would have asked at the time, whether the determination of the political unions to march on London in case of need, was not the chief sin and folly of the time. We think not, while feeling strong sympathy with those who come to an opposite conclusion. In judging of the right and wrong of a case so critical, every thing depends on the evidence that exists as to what the principles and powers of the opposing parties really were. This evidence we shall find disclosed in the history of the next year. Meantime, in the March and April of 1831, the great middle class, by whose intelligence and determination the Bill must be carried, believed that occasion might arise for their refusing to pay taxes, and for their marching upon London, to support the King, the Administration, and the bulk of the nation, against a small class of unyielding and interested persons. The political unions made known the numbers they could muster; the chairman of the Birmingham Union declaring that they could send forth two armies, each fully worth that which had won Waterloo. On the coast of Sussex, ten thousand men declared themselves ready to march at any moment; Northumberland was prepared in like manner; Yorkshire was up and awake; and, in short, it might be said that the nation was ready to go up to London, if wanted. When the mighty processions of the unions marched to their meeting-grounds, the anti-reformers observed with a shudder that the towns were at the mercy of these mobs. The towns were at their mercy; but they were not mobs, and never were the good citizens more safe. The cry was vehement, that the measure was to be carried by intimidation; and this was true. The question was, whether, in this singular case, the intimidation was wrong. The ministers were vehemently accused of resorting to popular aid, and making use of all possible supports for the carrying their measure, in violation of all established etiquette. Lord Eldon thought them extremely vulgar, it is evident. The truth was that the popular aid resorted to them; and that they did consider the times too grave for etiquette, and the matter in hand far too serious to be

let drop, when a momentary vacillation on their part would bring on immediate popular convulsion. So they did declare in public, at the Lord Mayor's Easter dinner, — what Lord Eldon¹ thought “perfectly unconstitutional,” — that they had the King's confidence and good wishes; they did wait in silence to see whether it would become necessary for the political unions to act; and they did not retire from office when left with a majority of only one, but bore with all taunts and sneers, and preferred a neglect of propriety and precedent to a desertion of the cause to which they had pledged their fidelity. We cannot reckon any of these things, though irregular and portentous, among the sins and follies of the time, but rather among its noblest features. Among these we should reckon also a public declaration against the Bill, put forth by several hundreds of merchants, bankers, and eminent citizens of London; a declaration which, though proved mistaken in its view, was, in its diction and manner, calm, loyal, and courageous.² If the opposition of the anti-reformers generally had been more of this character, there would have been less marshalling of political unions.

Some of the experienced old conservatives thought it one of the sins and follies of the time, that their own party made no preparation for combined action against the Bill. It was on the second reading that the ministers had been left with a majority of one, in the fullest House ever known to have divided, — the numbers being, besides the speaker and the four tellers, 302 to 301, making a House of 608.³ The ministers did not resign on this; and the people illuminated because they did not. The Easter holidays were at hand; and immediately after, the Bill was to be considered in committee. These Easter holidays were the time when, as the experienced old conservatives thought, their party should have been organizing for opposition; but the party were very confident that it was quite unnecessary to take such trouble. The late vote had shown that the Whigs could not carry their measure. They were, their opponents declared, a factious set, who vulgarly staid in office as long as possible, and were preparing all possible trouble for their successors; but they were now proved too weak in the Commons, to be formidable to the Lords. “All will be lost,” Lord Eldon⁴ wrote in this interval, “by the confidence with which people act, and with which they persuade themselves that all will be safe. Lord Sidmouth, on the day in which the second reading of the Bill was carried, spoke to me of the majority by which it would undoubtedly be lost and negatived. And now the few, very few individuals here whom I see, speak of the rejection of the Bill, as

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, p. iii. 126.

² Annual Register, July 1831, p. 81.

³ Hansard, iii. p. 804.

⁴ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 125.

if it was certainly to be rejected, though no two persons agree as to what shall be the course of the measures by which its rejection can be accomplished."

On the 18th of April, the Commons went into committee on the Reform Bill; and on the 19th, ministers were defeated on the point of reducing the number of members Defeat of ministers. in the House. General Gascoyne moved that the numbers should not be reduced; and he obtained a majority of eight over ministers.¹

On the 21st, or rather on the morning of the 22d, there was another defeat, which brought matters to a crisis. The opposition, after losing much time in talking about any thing but the question before the House, refused to go into the consideration of a question of supply. They moved and carried an adjournment against the Chancellor of the Exchequer, leaving ministers in a minority of 22.² This act of the opposition was looked upon, by some stretch of construction, as a refusal of the supplies. In the morning, the ministers offered their resignations to the King; but he would not accept them. He desired that they should go on with the Reform Bill, and get it carried as well as they could; but unfortunately, though very naturally, he objected to the first measure which they considered essential,—the dissolution of the new Parliament, now in the midst of its first session.

Though other parts of that mighty struggle might appear more imposing, more dangerous, more awful, in the eyes of True crisis. common observers, the real crisis lay within the compass of this day,—the 22d of April. The ministers themselves said so afterwards. When, in a subsequent season, the very ground shook with the tread of multitudes, and the broad heaven echoed with their shouts, and the Peers quaked in their House, and the world seemed to the timid to be turned upside down, the ministers were calm and secure; they knew the event to be determined, and could calculate its very date; whereas now, on this 22d of April, they found themselves standing on a fearful Mohammedan bridge,—on the sharp edge of chance, with abysses of revolution on either hand. The people were not aware of the exigency; and the ministers were not, for the moment, aided by pressure from without. The doubt—the critical doubt—was whether the King could be persuaded to dissolve the Parliament.

The probable necessity of this course, and the King's repugnance to it, had been discussed throughout London for some days, and especially on the preceding day. The Administration and the cause were injured by the understood difficulty with the sovereign; and it was in a manner perfectly unprecedented that Lord Wharnccliffe, on the night of the 21st, had asked Lord Grey in the House whether ministers had advised the King to dissolve

¹ Hansard, iii. p. 1688.

² Hansard, iii. p. 1805.

Parliament.¹ On Lord Grey declining to answer the question, Lord Wharnccliffe gave notice that he should move to-morrow an address to the King, remonstrating against such a proposed exertion of the royal prerogative. After what happened in the other House at a later hour, there was nothing to be done but to enforce upon the King the alternative of losing his ministers or dissolving Parliament; and, the next morning, Lord Grey went

The palace. to the palace for the purpose of procuring a decision of

the matter. He and a colleague or two walked quietly and separately across the park, to avoid exciting notice. For some hours there appeared little chance of a decision; but at length the perplexed sovereign began to see his way. He was yielding,—had yielded,—but with strong expressions of reluctance, when that reluctance was suddenly changed into alacrity by the news which was brought him of the tone used in the House of Lords about the impossibility that he would actually dissolve Parliament, undoubted as was his constitutional power to do so. What! did they dare to meddle with his prerogative? the King exclaimed: he would presently show them what he could and would do. He had given his promise, and now he would lose no time; he would go instantly,—that very moment,—and dissolve Parliament by his own voice. “As soon as the royal carriages could be got ready,” his ministers agreed. “Never mind the carriages; send for a hackney-coach,” replied the King,—a saying which spread over the kingdom, and much enhanced his popularity for the moment.

Lord Durham ran down to the gate, and found but one carriage waiting,—the Lord Chancellor’s. He gave orders to drive fast to Lord Albemarle’s, the Master of the Horse. Lord Albemarle was at his late breakfast, but started up on the entrance of Lord Durham, asking what was the matter. “You must have the King’s carriages ready instantly,”—“The King’s carriages! Very well: I will just finish my breakfast.”—“Finish your breakfast! Not you! You must not lose a moment. The King ought to be at the House.”—“Lord bless me! is there a revolution?”—“Not at this moment; but there will be if you stay to finish your breakfast.” So the tea and roll were left, and the royal carriages drove up to the palace in an incredibly short time. The King was ready and impatient, and walked with an unusually brisk step. And so did the royal horses, in their passage through the streets, as was observed by the curious and anxious gazers.

Meantime, the scenes which were taking place in the two Houses were such as could never be forgotten by those who witnessed, or who afterwards heard any authentic account of them.

¹ Hansard, iii. p. 1741.

The Peers assembled in unusual numbers at two o'clock to hear Lord Wharnccliffe's motion for an address to His Majesty, praying that His Majesty would be graciously pleased not to exercise his undoubted prerogative of dissolving Parliament; every one of them being in more or less expectation that his Lordship's speech might be rendered unavailing by some notification from the throne, though few or none probably anticipated such a scene as took place.

The Lords.

Almost immediately, the Lord Chancellor left the woolsack. Could he be gone to meet the King? Lord Shaftesbury was called to the chair, and Lord Wharnccliffe rose. As soon as he had opened his lips, the Duke of Richmond, a member of the Administration, called some of their Lordships to order, requesting that, as bound by the rules, they would be seated in their proper places.¹ This looked as if the King was coming. Their Lordships were angry: several rose to order at the same time, and said some sharp things as to who or what was most disorderly; so that the Duke of Richmond moved for the standing order to be read, that no offensive language should be used in that House. In the midst of this lordly wrangling, and of a confusion of voices rising into cries, boom! came the sound of cannon, which announced that the King was on the way! Some of the peeresses had by this time entered, to witness the spectacle of the prorogation. For a few minutes, something like order was restored, and Lord Wharnccliffe read his proposed address, which was as strong a remonstrance, as near an approach to interference with the royal prerogative, as might be expected from the occasion.² The Lord Chancellor re-entered the House, and, without waiting for a pause, said, with strong emphasis, "I never yet heard that the Crown ought not to dissolve Parliament whenever it thought fit, particularly at a moment when the House of Commons had thought fit to take the extreme and unprecedented step of refusing the supplies." Before he could be further heard for the cries of "Hear, hear!" shouts were intermingled of "The King, the King!" and the Lord Chancellor again rushed out of the House, rendering it necessary for Lord Shaftesbury to resume the chair. Every moment now added to the confusion. The hubbub, heard beyond the House, reached the ear of the King,—reached his heart, and roused in him the strong spirit of regality. The Peers grew violent, and the peeresses alarmed. Several of these high-born ladies, who had probably never seen exhibitions of vulgar wrath before, rose together, and looked about them, when they beheld their Lordships below pushing and hustling, and shaking their hands in each others' faces.

¹ Hansard, iii, p. 1806.

² Hansard, iii. p. 1807.

Lord Mansfield at length made himself heard; and he spoke strongly of the "most awful predicament" of the King and the country, and on the conduct of ministers in "conspiring together against the safety of the State, and of making the sovereign the instrument of his own destruction;"¹ words which naturally caused great confusion. He was proceeding, when the shout again arose, "The King, the King!" and a commanding voice was heard over all, solemnly uttering, "God save the King!" Lord Mansfield proceeded, however. The great doors on the right side of the throne flew open: still his lordship proceeded. Lord Durham, the first in the procession, appeared on the threshold, carrying the crown on its cushion: still his Lordship proceeded. The King appeared on the threshold; and his Lordship was still proceeding, when the Peers on either side and behind laid hands on him, and compelled him to silence, while his countenance was convulsed with agitation.

The King had a flush on his cheek, and an unusual brightness in his eye. He walked rapidly and firmly, and ascended the steps of the throne with a kind of eagerness. He bowed right and left, and desired their Lordships to be seated while the Commons were summoned. For a little time it appeared doubtful whether even the oil of anointing would calm the tossing waves of strife; but, after all, the Peers were quiet sooner than the Commons.

That House, too, was crowded, expectant, eager, and passionate.² Sir Richard Vyvyan was the spokesman of the Commons. opposition; and a very strong one. A question of order arose, as to whether Sir Richard Vyvyan was or was not keeping within the fair bounds of his subject, — which was a reform petition; whereas he was speaking on "dissolution or no dissolution." The speaker appears to have been agitated from the beginning; and there were several members who were not collected enough to receive his decisions with the usual deference. Honorable members turned upon each other, growing contradictory, sharp, angry, — even abusive. Lord John Russell attempted to make himself heard, but in vain: his was no voice to pierce through such a tumult. The speaker was in a state of visible emotion. Sir Richard Vyvyan, however, regained a hearing; but, as soon as he was once more in full flow, boom! came the cannon which told that the King was on his way; and the roar drowned the conclusion of the sentence. Not a word more was heard for the cheers, the cries, — and even shouts of laughter; all put down together, at regular intervals, by the discharges of artillery. At one moment, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Althorp, and Sir Francis Burdett, were all using the most vehement action of command

¹ Hansard, iii. p. 1808.

² Hansard, iii. p. 1811 – 1823.

and supplication in dumb show, and their friends were laboring in vain to procure a hearing for them. The speaker himself stood silenced by the tumult, till the cries took more and more the sound of "Shame! shame!" and more eyes were fixed upon him till he could have made himself heard, if he had not been too much moved to speak. When he recovered voice, he decided that Sir Robert Peel was entitled to address the House. With occasional uproar, this was permitted; and Sir Robert Peel was still speaking when the usher of the black rod appeared at the bar, to summon the Commons to His Majesty's presence. Sir Robert Peel continued to speak, loudly and vehemently, after the appearance of the usher of the black rod; and it was only by main force, by pulling him down by the skirts of his coat, that those near him could compel him to take his seat.

The hundred members who accompanied the speaker to the presence of the King, rushed in "very tumultuously." There is an interest in the mutual addresses of sovereign and people, in a crisis like this, which is not felt in ordinary times; and the words of the speaker first, and then of the King, were listened to with extreme eagerness.¹

The speaker said, "May it please Your Majesty, we, Your Majesty's most faithful Commons, approach Your Majesty with profound respect; and, Sire, in no period of our history, have the Commons House of Parliament more faithfully responded to the real feelings and interests of Your Majesty's loyal, dutiful, and affectionate people; while it has been their earnest desire to support the dignity and honor of the Crown, upon which depend the greatness, the happiness, and the prosperity of this country."

The King spoke in a firm, cheerful, and dignified tone and manner. The speech, which besides referred only to money-matters and economy, and to our state of peace with foreign powers, began and ended thus: "I have come to meet you for the purpose of proroguing this Parliament, with a view to its immediate dissolution. I have been induced to resort to this measure, for the purpose of ascertaining the sense of my people, in the way in which it can be most constitutionally and most authentically expressed, on the expediency of making such changes in the representation as circumstances may appear to require, and which, founded upon the acknowledged principles of the constitution, may tend at once to uphold the just rights and prerogatives of the Crown, and to give security to the liberties of the people. . . . In resolving to recur to the sense of my people, in the present circumstances of the country, I have been influenced only by a paternal anxiety for the contentment

Prorogation.

¹ Hansard, iii. p. 1810.

and happiness of my subjects, to promote which, I rely with confidence on your continued and zealous assistance."

"It is over!" said those to each other who understood the crisis better than it was apprehended by the nation at large. "All is over!" whispered the anti-reformers to each other. The members of both Houses went home that April afternoon, hoarse, heated, exhausted, — conscious that such a scene had never been witnessed within the walls of Parliament since Cromwell's days. The ministers went home, to take some rest, knowing that all was safe; that is, that to the people was now fairly committed the people's cause.

A proclamation, declaring the dissolution of the Parliament, appeared next day; and the new writs were made returnable on the 14th of June.

Dissolution.

CHAPTER IV.

THE people thoroughly understood that their cause was now consigned to their own hands. In all preceding "revolutions" — to adopt the term used by the anti-reformers — they had acted, when they acted at all, under the direction of a small upper class who thought and understood for them, and used them as instruments. Now the thinkers and leaders were of every class; and the multitude acted, not only under orders, but in concert. If for every nobleman and legislator who desired parliamentary reform for distinct political reasons there were hundreds of middle-class men, for every hundred middle-class men there were tens of thousands of the working classes who had an interest, an opinion, and a will in the matter, which made them, instead of mere instruments, political agents. The whole countless multitude of reformers had laid hold of the principle, that the most secure and the shortest way of obtaining what they wanted was to obtain representation. This was a broad, clear truth which every man could understand, and on which every earnest man was disposed to act as men are wont to act on clear and broad truths; and the non-electors felt themselves called upon to put forth such power as they had, as a means to obtaining the power which they claimed. The elections were, to a wonderful extent, carried by the non-electors, by means of their irresistible power over those who had the suffrage. Times were indeed changed since the century when Leeds and Manchester had, for a short time, been allowed to send members to Parliament in Cromwell's days, and had then again been quietly disfranchised, almost without a murmur on any hand. In those old days, these populous towns had been admitted to the representation, because legislators, looking abroad from their point of survey, saw that in reason they ought to be. They were to be represented now because the inhabitants themselves demanded it, for reasons which it was their turn to propound. For some time they had been preparing to enforce their demand; and the first obvious occasion for action was now, when a House of Commons was to be returned whose special business it was to reform itself.

The great unrepresented towns were co-operated with all over the country, — even in rural hamlets and scattered farmsteads. In such places, half-a-dozen laborers would club their earnings to buy a weekly newspaper — these costing sevenpence at first price — on the second day; and the one who could read best, read aloud the whole of the debates after the memorable 1st of March, to his companions, as they crowded round him in a shed, by the light of a single tallow candle. Rural artisans walked miles, after working-hours, to the nearest towns, to learn what was posted up on the walls, and said in public-houses. By the time the elections were to take place, tens of thousand of working-men knew something more than the mere names of Russell, Grey, and Brougham, and their leading opponents: they knew their ways of thinking and speaking, their aims and their plans; and this was an inestimable help in showing such political students what to do. It is true, few of these novices were very wise on their great subject, and a multitude were ignorant and prejudiced: some wished for foreign war, and some for civil war, as a vent for their own pugnacity; some were for persecuting their neighbors who differed from them; and others drew glorious pictures of the wealth they should all enjoy, when every man had a vote, and had voted away all the taxes: but even the most ignorant and unreasonable were in a better condition than before, — more able to understand reason, — more fit to be influenced by their wiser neighbors, — better qualified to trust the authors and influential promoters of the great measure. As for the higher orders of non-electors, — the intelligent men of the towns, — by combining their lights, they easily saw what to do. They combined their will, their knowledge, and their manifest force, in political unions, whence they sent forth will, knowledge, and influence, over wide districts of the land. And the electors, seeing the importance of the crisis, — the unspeakable importance that it should be well conducted; — joined these unions, and by their weight of character, intelligence, and station, preserved them from much folly and aimless effort; kept up the self-respect and sobriety of the best of the non-electors, and curbed the violence of the worst. Wealthy capitalists, eminent bankers, members of the late Parliament, and country gentlemen, agreed over their wine that they ought to join the political union of the district, and went the next morning to enrol themselves. When face to face, in their meetings with their neighbors of lower degree, they taught and learned much: new openings for action appeared; daily opportunities offered for spreading knowledge, proposing sound views, and discountenancing violence. They were startled by sudden apparitions of men of minds superior to their own, — men of genius and

heroism, — rising up from the most depressed ranks of non-electors; and they, in their turn, were found to be imbued with that respect for men as men which is the result of superior education, but which the poor and depressed too often conceive not to exist among the idle independent, whom they are apt to call the proud. Such was the preparation going forward throughout the country, while the ministers were at their work in London; the rapid social education of all ranks, which may be regarded as another of the ever-springing blessings of the peace, and by which the great transition from the old to the new parliamentary system was rendered safe. That the amount of violence was no greater than it was, remained, and still remains, a matter of astonishment to the anti-reform party, and was a blessing scarcely hoped for on the other side. After the three days in Paris, in the preceding July, thoughtful Englishmen asked each other with anxiety, whether it was conceivable that their own countrymen would behave, in a similar crisis, with such chivalrous honor, and such enlightened moderation, as the French populace. The question was not now precisely answered, because the crisis was not similar, — the British King and his ministers being on the side of the people, and the conflict being only with a portion of the aristocracy of birth and wealth; but there was enough of intelligence and moral nobleness in the march of the English movement, to inspire Englishmen with a stronger mutual respect and a brighter political hope than they had ever entertained before.

Such evidence as there was at present was window-breaking on illumination nights, and hustlings and threatenings in the streets, at the election time, which compelled some anti-reform candidates, and their agents, to hide themselves. (A few scattered instances of this kind of disturbance occurred in England; and in Scotland the riots were really formidable.) The anti-reformers there carried all before them, from their possessing almost a monopoly of political power. These election days and illumination nights are the occasions when brawlers and thieves come forth to indulge their passions and reap their harvest; and in Edinburgh and London they made use of their opportunity, to the discredit of the popular cause. On the dissolution of Parliament, the Lord Mayor sanctioned the illumination of London; and the windows of the Duke of Wellington, Mr. Baring, and other leading anti-reformers, were broken. After the Edinburgh election, the Lord Provost was attacked on the North Bridge, and with difficulty rescued by the military. We happen to know what was thought, on the occasion, by a reformer, noted for his radicalism.¹ "As dash went the stones,"

Riots.

¹ Autobiography of a Working-man, pp. 157 - 8.

he says, "smash fell the glass, and crash came the window-frames, from nine o'clock to near midnight, reflection arose, and asked seriously and severely, what this meant: was it reform? was it popular liberty? Many thousands of others who were there must have asked themselves the same questions. . . . The reform newspapers were content to say that the riots reflected no discredit on reformers; the rioters were only 'the *blackguards* of the town.' . . . I believe that there is now one problem solved by experience, which was hidden in futurity then; namely, that the greater the number of men enfranchised, the smaller is the number of 'blackguards.'"

The election cry was, "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill!" and the result was, that such an assemblage of reformers was returned, that their opponents styled them a com-
New House of Commons. pany of pledged delegates, and no true House of Commons. And it was certain that such a thing as they called a true House of Commons, they would never more see. Out of eighty-two county members, only six were opposed to the Bill. Yorkshire sent four reformers; and so did London.¹ General Gascoyne was driven from Liverpool, Sir Richard Vyvyan from Cornwall, Sir Edward Knatchbull from Kent, and Mr. Banks from Dorsetshire. The Duke of Newcastle could, this time, do nothing with his "own." The most remarkable defeat of the Ministerial party, but one which was sure to happen, was at Cambridge University, where Lord Palmerston and Mr. Cavendish were driven out by Mr. Goulburn and Mr. W. Peel.

After re-electing the Speaker, and hearing from the King's own lips a recommendation to undertake the reform of their House, the Commons went to work again. The bill was intro-
Second Reform Bill. duced on the 24th of June; but the second reading stood over till the 4th of July, that the Scotch and Irish Reform Bills might be brought in. The debate lasted three nights, when a division was taken on the second reading, which gave the ministers a majority of 136 in a House of 598 members.

It was clear that the ministers were so strong that they were sure of their own way in this House; but the strain upon the temper and patience of the large majority was greater than they would have supported in a meaner cause.² When we remember that the minority sincerely believed that they were now witnessing the last days of the constitution, we cannot wonder at their determination to avail themselves of all the forms of the House, and of every passing incident, to delay the destruction of the country. They avowed their purpose, and they adhered to it with unflinching obstinacy. The House went into committee

¹ Annual Register, 1831, p. 154.

² Hansard, iv. p. 906.

on the 12th of July; and it was at once evident that every borough was to be contended for, every population return questioned, every point debated on which an argument could be hung; and this, not on account of the merits of the case, but merely to protract the time, and leave room for "fate, or Providence, or something," to interfere. If at midnight, in the hot glare of the lamps, any member dropped asleep, a piqued orator would make that a cause of delay, that he might be properly attended to to-morrow; and, another time, the House would sit till the summer sunshine was glittering on the breakfast-tables of the citizens, the opposition hoping to wear out the vigilance of the proposers of the Bill. The people grew angry, and the newspapers spoke their wrath. It was all very well, they said, to insist on the fullest discussion of every principle; but to wrangle for every item, after the principle had been settled,—to do this with the avowed object of awaiting accidents, and in defiance of the declared will of the nation at large, was an insolence and obstruction not to be borne. When, towards the end of the month, people began to ask when and how this was to end, the ministers moved that the reform business should take precedence of all other; and it was arranged that the discussion should proceed from five o'clock every day. Before August came in, however, signs appeared of an unappeased discontent on the part of the non-electors, who dreaded lest the heats of August in town, and the attractions of that month in the Scotch moors, should draw off their champions from their duty; and it became known in the House that a conference had taken place between the political unions of Birmingham, Manchester, and Glasgow, in order to agree how long they would wait. The majority in the House thought it right to intimate such facts, to prove the danger of the times. The minority called it stifling discussion by threats, and considered whether they could not be a little slower still, in assertion of their constitutional right of debate. Weeks passed on; the summer heats rose to their height, and declined; the days shortened; honorable members, haggard and nervous, worn with eight hours per night of skirmishing and wrangling, pined for fresh air and country quietness; and still every borough and every population statement was contested. It was the 7th of September before the committee reported. On the 13th, and two following days, the report was considered, when only a few verbal amendments were proposed.¹ The final debate occupied the evenings of the 19th, 20th, and 21st of September; and, at its close, the Bill passed the Commons, by a majority of

Committee.

The Bill
passes the
Commons.¹ Hansard, vii. p. 464.

109 ; the numbers for and against being 345 to 236. Both London and the country had grown tired of waiting, and had somewhat relaxed their attention when they found that the members might be relied on for remaining at their posts ; but, on this occasion, all were as eager as ever. The House was surrounded by crowds, who caught up the cheers within on the announcement of the majority ; cheers which were renewed so perseveringly, that it seemed as if the members had no thoughts of going home. There was little sleep in London that night. The cheering ran along the streets, and was caught up again and again till morning. Such of the Peers as were in town, awaiting their share of the business, which was now immediately to begin, must have heard the shouting the whole night through. It is certain that it was the deliberate intention of the greater number of them to throw out the Bill very speedily. If the acclamations of that night did not raise a doubt as to the duty and safety of their course, they must have been in a mood unlike that of ordinary men, meditating in the watches of the night.

Before daylight, the news was on its way into the country ; and, wherever it spread, it floated the flags, and woke up the bells, and filled the air with shouts and music. In the midst of this, however, the older and graver men turned to each other with the question, "What will the Lords do?" Lord Grey's speech, in opening the debate in the House of Peers, shows to those who read it now, that he had a precise foresight of what the Lords would do, and particularly the bishops. Lord First reading in the Lords. Althorp, attended by a hundred of the Commons, carried up the Bill to the Peers, the day after it had passed the Lower House ; but the debate took place on the question of the second reading ; extending over five nights, from the 3d to the 7th of October.¹ It was an exceedingly fine

Debate. debate, as might have been expected from its nature.

Not only did the accomplishments of the noble speakers come into play, but they had never before spoken on a subject which concerned them so nearly, which they at once so thoroughly understood, and so deeply felt ; and their minds were roused and exercised accordingly. No position could be more dignified than

that of Lord Grey. He was safe from the taunt under which Lord Grey.

which the Duke of Wellington had winced, and under which many a Minister has since winced, — that he was the slave of popular clamor ; for he could point back to the year 1786, when he voted with Mr. Pitt for shortening the duration of parliaments ; and to a time before the old French Revolution, when he voted for Mr. Flood's measure of parliamentary reform. Standing on this high ground of principled consistency, the

¹ Hansard, vii. p. 928 ; viii. pp. 1–340.

venerable statesman was at liberty, from all self-regards, to be as great in his bearing as his measure was in its import. And truly great he was. From this day, for many months, he was subject to a series of provocations, which must often have worn his frame and sickened his spirit; but he never stooped to anger or impatience. His conscience calm and clear, his judgment settled, his knowledge and his powers concentrated in his measure, he could maintain his stand above the passions which were agitating other men. And he did maintain it, through all the personal fatigue and mental weariness of months. Through the vacillations of the King above him, and the raging and malice of the Peers around him, and the surging of the mob far below him, for which he was made responsible, he preserved an unbroken yet genial calmness, which made observers feel and say, that, among the various causes of emotion of that time, they knew nothing so moving as the greatness of Lord Grey. On this opening night of the debate, — the 3d of October, — he stood, by virtue of his experience and the meditation of half a century, like a seer, showing the issues of such procedure, on the one hand or the other, as their Lordships might adopt. Among his other warnings, that to the bishops stands out conspicuously and prophetically. ^{The bishops.} “Let me respectfully entreat those right reverend prelates,” he said, after an acknowledgment of their deserts and dignities, “to consider, that if this Bill should be rejected by a narrow majority of the lay Peers, — which I have reason to hope will not be the case; but if it should, and that its fate should thus, within a few votes, be decided by the votes of the heads of the Church, what will then be their situation with the country?¹ Those right reverend prelates have shown that they were not indifferent or inattentive to the signs of the times. . . . They appear to have felt that the eyes of the country are upon them; that it is necessary for them to set their house in order, and prepare to meet the coming storm. . . . They are the ministers of peace: earnestly do I hope that the result of their votes will be such as may tend to the tranquillity, to the peace, and happiness of the country.” If the bishops were aware that the eyes of the people were upon them, they seem to have been ignorant or thoughtless of one of the reasons why. The people, down to the very lowest of the populace, were willing to bear more, on this question, from the most aristocratic of the lay Peers, than from any of the spiritual Peers. There was no man anywhere so ignorant as not to see, that much allowance was to be made for noblemen of ancient lineage, called on to part with hereditary borough property, and with political influence, which became more valuable from one

¹ Hansard, vii. p. 967.

session of Parliament to another. The bishops had no plea for such allowance,—commoners by birth, as they were, having no interest in borough property, and no hereditary associations making war against present exigencies. If they really approved of our representative system, they should naturally desire its purification; and the whole people looked to see whether they did or not. If they did, they would show themselves, indeed, shepherds of the flock; if not, they must be regarded as the humble servants of the hereditary aristocracy; and their Church would be distrusted in proportion to the worldliness of her prelates. They did their utmost to ruin themselves and their Church. One bishop alone—the Bishop of Norwich—voted in favor of the Bill. Twenty-one—exactly enough to turn the scale—voted against the Bill; the majority by which it was thrown out being forty-one.¹ It was proclaimed over the whole kingdom, and it will never be forgotten, that it was the bishops who threw out the Reform Bill. Newspapers, in mourning edges, told this, in the course of a day or two, to every listener in the land. Every school-boy knew it; every beggar could cast it in the teeth of footmen in purple liveries on the steps of great houses. For many months,—till some time after the Reform Bill became the law of the land,—it was not safe for a bishop to appear in public in any article of sacerdotal dress. Insults followed, if apron or hat showed itself in the streets. And the bench gained nothing by yielding at last, because everybody knew they could not help it. While they imputed their yielding to a love of peace, they could not complain if the people assigned it to a lack of courage. Whether the deficiency was of sagacity, or knowledge, or independence, or principle, it did more to injure the Church, throughout the empire, than all hostility of Catholics and Dissenters together. Among the twenty-two anti-reform voters in the Lords, on the final reading, a few months after this, there is no bishop's name. Not the less for this was it everywhere still repeated, that it was the bishops that threw out the Reform Bill, till no child old enough to understand the words could ever forget them.

The Peers were not tempting fate in blindness. They knew what was said and thought of them, and what was threatened in case of their refusal to surrender their borough interests. They were aware, if they read the newspapers, that there was a change in the form of the popular question which every man had been asking his neighbor. Instead of the question, "What will the Lords do?" men were now asking, "What must be done with the Lords?" and the journals, having taken for granted that four hundred Peers were not to stand in the way of an essential im-

¹ Hansard, viii. p. 340.

provement desired by King and people, were beginning to discuss whether the King or the people should take the Peers in hand ; whether, as this was understood to mean, the King should create so many new Peers as to obtain a majority for the Bill, or the people should refuse to pay taxes till they had obtained a better representation. If the Lords did not read the newspapers, — and Lord Grey gave great and general offence, in the midst of his popularity, by declaring that he did not, — they had other means of information. On the day of the loss of the Bill, Lord Eldon¹ wrote, before going to the work of mischief, “ Making new Peers to pass it has been much talked of ; but, unless our calculation of numbers is erroneous, and most grossly so, audacity itself could not venture to attempt a sufficient supply of new Peers.” Again, on the 5th of October, a remarkable scene had taken place in the House of Lords, before entering on the topic of the night. During the debate, more and more peeresses attended every evening, bringing their daughters and relations, for whom seats were placed below the bar.² Instead of two or three ladies, quietly listening behind a curtain, there was now an assemblage on rows of chairs, smiling, frowning, fidgeting, — indicating their agitation in every way short of clapping and groaning. The space about the throne was thronged with listening foreigners, and members of the other House ; and, on this evening, the conspicuous figure of the intelligent Hindoo, Rammohun-Roy, was in the midst of the group, his spreading turban attracting many eyes, and his mobile countenance varying with every turn of the discussion. All these, and a very full House of Peers, were present when evidence was brought forward of what the people were thinking of doing with the Peers, in case of too obstinate a stand for the rotten boroughs. On occasion of the presentation of petitions, information was given of something ominous which had taken place at a meeting of 100,000 people at Birmingham.³ After one orator there had, quite unconstitutionally, asked repeatedly and significantly the question, whether the Lords would “ dare ” to reject the Bill, another had declared his intention to pay no taxes till the Bill should have passed ; and his declaration had been received with loud cheers. On his desiring those who agreed with him to hold up their hands, a countless multitude of hands was held up ; and, on his asking for a sign of dissent, not a single hand was held up. While all the Peers who spoke upon this news, from Lord Chancellor Brougham to his predecessor, Lord Eldon, denounced such proceedings as unconstitutional, no Peer could, from that hour, be supposed ignorant of what he was doing, in driving the people and the sovereign to one or the other of these methods of procur-

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 147.

² Hansard, vii. p. 1308.

³ Hansard, vii. p. 1323.

ing a law which all but a small fraction of society desired, and chose to obtain. Yet, on the 7th, they threw out the Bill, by a majority in which they gloried, as being much larger than the ministers had anticipated. Their expectation was that all would now go well. Lord Grey had declared, that by this measure the Administration would stand or fall. The measure having been lost, the Administration must fall. After relating how the final debate lasted till between six and seven in the morning, Lord Eldon¹ wrote, "The fate of the Bill, therefore, is decided. . . . The night was made interesting by the anxieties of all present. Perhaps, fortunately, the mob would not on the outside wait so long as it was before Lords left the inside of the House." Their Lordships got home unmolested that autumn morning, and awaited joyfully the tidings of the fall of the Administration. But they had far other news to hear. The King meant to prorogue Parliament immediately, in order to a speedy re-assembling, and going over the whole matter again.

This was a prospect full of weariness and anxiety to everybody. As for the King, he came down to the House on the 20th of October, in temper and spirits as yet apparently unchanged; and his speech manifested the unrelaxed resolution of his ministers.² It earnestly recommended the careful preservation of tranquillity throughout the country, during the suspense in which the great question was held. As for the Peers, some believed, and with too much excuse, that the hour of revolution was really come. "Our day here yesterday was tremendously alarming," Lord Eldon had written a week before this time. Many windows had been broken, several Peers insulted in the streets, and Lord Londonderry struck insensible from his horse by the blow of a stone. Lord Eldon,³ while writing of "the immense mob of Reformers," admits that there was "hardly a decent-looking man among them;" and it was indeed the case that the excitement of the time had called out all the disorderly part of society into view and action. Not only the ignorant and violent desirers of parliamentary reform, but thieves and vagabonds, made use of the opportunity to stir up the passions under whose cover they might pursue their aims of plunder. This was made clear by the presence of well-known London faces, not only at the window-breaking at the West End, but in the mobs at Derby and Bristol, where the most serious damage was done to the reform cause. "Everywhere," Lord Eldon said, "the mischief is occasioned by strangers from other parts coming to do mischief." The fact was clear; only, Lord Eldon called these strangers "Reformers,"

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 152.

³ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 153.

² Hansard, viii. p. 928.

while the police called them the "swell-mob." Disastrous, indeed, was the injury they did.

The great body of Reformers stood firm and calm because the government did so.¹ The House of Commons had immediately followed up the rejection of the Bill by a vote of confidence in ministers, which removed all fear of their resigning; and calm patience was certain to carry the great objects of the time. But then came these incendiaries, stirring up riots in Derby and Nottingham first, and afterwards at Bristol, — not only discrediting the reform cause, but doing a yet more terrible mischief by perplexing and alarming the King. The King remained, to all appearance, firm till after the prorogation of Parliament, the Derby and Nottingham riots having meantime occurred: but the more fearful affair at Bristol shook his decision and his courage; and it is understood, that, from that date, the work of his ministers was more arduous than before.²

At Derby, some rioters were consigned to jail for window-breaking; and the jail was carried by the mob, the prisoners released, and several lives lost after the arrival of the military. At Nottingham, the castle was burnt, — avowedly because it was the property of the Duke of Newcastle. To all to whom the name and fame of the devoted Lucy Hutchinson and her spouse are dear, this event was a mournful one; but the walls remain, and the beauty of the site cannot be impaired while any part of the building meets the eye.³ The Duke recovered 21,000*l.* from the county as damages, and certainly appeared to suffer much less under the event than his respectable neighbors of the reform party. He evidently enjoyed his martyrdom.

{The Bristol mobs have always been noted for their brutality; and the outbreak now was such as to amaze and confound the whole kingdom. It will ever remain a national disgrace that such materials existed in such quantity for London rogues to operate upon. Nothing like these Bristol riots had happened since the Birmingham riots in 1791.

London rogues could have had no such power, as in this case, if the political and moral state of Bristol had not been bad. Its political state was disgraceful. The venality of its elections was notorious. It had a close corporation, between whom and the citizens there was no community of feeling on municipal subjects. The lower parts of the city were the harborage of probably a worse seaport populace than any other place in England, while the police was ineffective and demoralized. There was no city in which a greater amount of savagery lay beneath a society

¹ Hansard, viii. p. 385.

² Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 161.

³ Annual Register, 1832, Chron. p. 108.

proud, exclusive, and mutually repellent, rather than enlightened, and accustomed to social co-operation. These are circumstances which go far to account for the Bristol riots being so fearfully bad as they were. Of this city, Sir Charles Wetherell — then at the height of his unpopularity as a vigorous opponent of the Reform Bill — was recorder; and there he had to go, in the last days of October, in his judicial capacity. Strenuous efforts had been made to exhibit before the eyes of the Bristol people the difference between the political and judicial functions of their recorder, and to show them that to receive the judge with respect was not to countenance his political course; yet the symptoms of discontent were such as to induce the mayor, Mr. Pinney, to apply to the home-office for military aid. Lord Melbourne sent down some troops of horse, which were quartered within reach, in the neighborhood of the city.¹ It was an unfortunate circumstance, that, owing to the want of a common interest between the citizens and the corporation, scarcely any gentlemen offered their services as special constables, but such as were accustomed to consider the lower classes with contempt as a troublesome rabble, and rather relished an occasion for defying and humbling them. Such was the preparation made in the face of the fact, that Sir Charles Wetherell could not be induced to relinquish his public entry, though warned of danger by the magistrates themselves; and of the other important fact, that the London rogues, driven from the metropolis by the new police, were known to be infesting every place where there was hope of confusion and spoil.

On Saturday, October 29, Sir Charles Wetherell entered Bristol in pomp; and, before he reached the Mansion House at noon, he must have been pretty well convinced, by the hootings and throwing of stones, that he had better have foregone the procession. For some hours, the special constables and the noisy mob, in front of the Mansion House, exchanged discourtesies of an emphatic character; but there was no actual violence till night.² At night, the Mansion House was attacked, and the Riot Act was read; but the military were not brought down, as they ought to have been, to clear the streets. The mayor had “religious scruples,” and was “humane;” and his indecision was not overborne by any aid from his brother-magistrates. When the military were brought in, it was after violence had been committed, and when the passions of the mob were much excited. Sir Charles Wetherell escaped from the city that night. During the dark hours, sounds were heard provocative of further riot; shouts in the streets, and the hammering of workmen who were boarding up the lower windows of the Mansion House and the

¹ Monthly Repository, v. pp. 843–852.

² Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 172.

neighboring dwellings. On the Sunday morning, the rioters broke into the Mansion House without opposition ; and, from the time they got into the cellars, all went wrong. Hungry wretches and boys broke the necks of the bottles, and Queen Square was strewed with the bodies of the dead-drunk. The soldiers were left without orders, and their officers without that sanction of the magistracy, in the absence of which they could not act, but only parade ; and, in this parading, some of the soldiers naturally lost their tempers, and spoke and made gestures on their own account, which did not tend to the soothing of the mob. This mob never consisted of more than five or six hundred ; and twenty thousand orderly persons attended the churches and chapels that day, to whom no appeal on behalf of peace and the law was made. At a word, through the pastors, from the magistrates, indicating how they should act, the heads of these families could easily have co-operated to secure the protection of the city. The mob declared openly what they were going to do ; and they went to work unchecked — armed with staves and bludgeons from the quays, and with iron palisades from the Mansion House — to break open and burn the bridewell, the jail, the bishop's palace, the custom-house, and Queen Square. They gave half an hour's notice to the inhabitants of each house in the square, which they then set fire to in regular succession, till two sides, each measuring 550 feet, lay in smoking ruins. The bodies of the drunken were seen roasting in the fire. The greater number of the rioters were believed to be under twenty years of age, and some were mere children ; some Sunday scholars, hitherto well conducted, and it may be questioned whether one in ten knew any thing of the Reform Bill, or the offences of Sir Charles Wetherell. On the Monday morning, after all actual riot seemed to be over, the soldiery at last made two slaughterous charges. More horse arrived, and a considerable body of foot soldiers ; and the constabulary became active ; and from that time the city was in a more orderly state than the residents were accustomed to see it.

The inhabitants at large were not disposed to acquiesce quietly in the disgrace of their city. Public meetings were held to petition the government to make inquiry into the causes and circumstances of the disturbances, — the petitioners emphatically declaring their opinion, “that Bristol owed all the calamities they deplored to the system under the predominance of which they had taken place.” The magistrates were brought to trial, and so was Colonel Brereton, who was understood to be in command of the whole of the military. The result of that court-martial caused more emotion throughout the kingdom than all the slaughtering and burning, and the subsequent executions, which marked that fearful season.

It was a year before the trial of the magistrates was entered upon.¹ The result was the acquittal of the mayor, and the consequent relinquishment of the prosecution of his brother-magistrates. While every one saw that great blame rested somewhere, no one was disposed to make a victim of a citizen who found himself, at a time of extreme emergency, in the midst of a system which rendered a proper discharge of his duty impossible. All agreed that Bristol must no longer be misgoverned; but no one desired to punish the one man, or the three or five men, in whose term of office the existing corruption and inefficiency were made manifest by a sort of accident. Instead of complaining that Mr. Pinney and the other aldermen escaped, men mourned that Colonel Brereton had not lain under the same conditions of impunity.

The magistrates believed that they had done their part in desiring that the commanders of the military would act according to their discretion. Colonel Brereton believed, that, before he could act, he must have a more express sanction from the magistracy than he could obtain. Between them, nothing was done. The mayor was not the only "humane" man. Colonel Brereton also was "humane." He saw a crowd of boys and women, with a smaller proportion of men, collected, without apparent aim, and in a mood to be diverted, as he thought, from serious mischief. While inwardly chafing at being left without authority,—not empowered to do any thing but ride about,—he rode in among them, made use of his popularity, spoke to them, and let them shake hands with him.² This would have been well, if all had ended well. But the event decided the case against him. He knew how unfavorably these acts would tell on his trial. Full of keen sensibilities, nothing in him was more keen than his sense of professional honor. He sank under the conflict between his civil and professional conscience. He was crushed in the collision between the natural and the conventional systems of social and military duty in which he found himself entangled. He had been too much of the man to make war, without overruling authorization, on the misguided and defenceless; and he found himself too much of the soldier to endure conventional dishonor. His trial began on the 9th of the next January. For four days he struggled on in increasing agony of mind. On the night of the 12th, he, for the first time, omitted his visit at bedtime to the chamber of his children,—his two young motherless daughters: he was heard walking for hours about his room; and when the court assembled in the morning, it was to hear that the prisoner had shot himself through the heart.³ The whole series

¹ Spectator, 1832, p. 1030.

² Annual Register, 1832, p. 50.

³ Annual Register, 1832, Chron. p. 14.

of events at Bristol became more and more disconnected in the general mind with the subject of the Reform Bill, as facts came out which showed that other proximate causes of disturbance would have, no doubt, wrought the same effects, sooner or later, as well as the one which chanced to occur. The question which did, from that time, lie deep down in thoughtful minds was, how long our Christian profession and our heathen practice — our social and military combinations — were to be supposed compatible, after a man, who united in himself the virtues of both, had been driven to suicide by their contrariety.

It is necessary to note the social disturbances which followed upon the rejection of the second Reform Bill; but it is no less necessary to point out, that the turbulence of this, as of all seasons, is easy to observe, while no account can be given which can represent to the imagination the prevailing calmness and order of the time. Calmness and order present no salient point for narrative and description; but their existence must not therefore be overlooked. A truly heroic state of self-discipline and obedience to law prevailed over the land, while in particular spots the turbulent were able to excite the giddy and the ignorant to riot. The nation was steadily rising to its most heroic mood; that mood in which, the next year, it carried through the sublime enterprise which no man, in the darkest moment, had any thought of surrendering.

CHAPTER V.

THE preparations for the renewal of the struggle for parliamentary reform began immediately after the prorogation, and were of a very serious character on every hand. As might be expected from the protraction of the quarrel, each party went further in its own direction; and the King, whose station was in the middle, became occasionally irresolute, through anxiety; an anxiety which plainly affected his health.

On the 31st of October, the London Political Union held an important meeting, which was so fully attended that the multitude adjourned to Lincoln's Inn Fields. The object of the day was to decree and organize a National Union, the provincial associations to be connected with it as branches, sending delegates to the central board. Thus far, all had gone well, as regarded these unions. The Administration had not been obliged to recognize their existence, while undoubtedly very glad of the fact. Whether their existence was constitutional, was one of the two great questions of the day. Hitherto, the government were not obliged to discuss it, in public or private, or to give any opinion; for, till now, the unions had done nothing objectionable. Now, however, the difficulty began. The less informed and more violent members of the London Union insisted upon demanding universal suffrage, and other matters not included in the Bill; while the wiser majority chose to adhere to their watchword, "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill."¹ The minority seceded, and constituted a Metropolitan Union of their own, whose avowed object was to defeat the ministerial measure, in order to obtain a more thorough opening of the representation. In their advertisements, they declared all hereditary privileges and all distinction of ranks to be unnatural and vicious; and invited the working-men throughout the country to come up to their grand meeting at White-Conduit House, on the 7th of November, declaring that such a display of strength must carry all before it. The government brought soldiery round the metropolis, had an army of special constables sworn in, — all in a quiet way, — and

¹ *Autobiography of a Working-man*, p. 240.

as quietly communicated with the union leaders. On the 5th, the Hatton-Garden magistrates informed these leaders that their proposed proceedings were illegal.¹ A deputation begged admission to the presence of the Home Secretary. Lord Melbourne saw them, and quietly pointed out to them which passages of their address were seditious, if not treasonable, involving in the guilt of treason all persons who attended their meeting for the purpose of promoting the objects proposed. The leaders at once abandoned their design. The ministers were blamed for letting them go, and taking no notice of the seditious advertisement; but no one, who, at this distance of time, compares the Melbourne and the Sidmouth days, can doubt that the forbearance was as wise as it was kind. What the offenders needed was better knowledge, not penal restraint, as their conduct in disbanding plainly showed. The peace of society lost nothing, and the influence of the government gained much, by the ministers showing themselves willing to enlighten rather than to punish ignorance, and to reserve their penalties, where circumstances allowed it, for wilful and obstinate violations of the law. The affair, however, alarmed the sovereign and the more timid of the aristocracy who had hitherto supported the reform measure.

At the same time, Lord Grey was beset by deputations from all ranks and classes, urging the shortening of the recess to the utmost, and the expediting the measure by all possible means; and especially by inducing the King to create Peers in sufficient numbers to secure the immediate passage of the Bill through the House of Lords. All the interests of the kingdom were suffering under suspense and disappointment, and the popular indignation against the obstructive Peers was growing dangerous. This proposition of a creation of Peers was the other great question of the day.

And seldom or never has there been a question more serious. Men saw now that the word "revolution," so often in the mouths of the anti-reformers, might prove to be not so inapplicable as had been supposed; that, if the Peers should not come immediately and voluntarily, and by the light of their own convictions, into harmony with the other two powers of the government, it would prove true, that, as they were themselves saying, "the balance of the constitution was destroyed." Was it not already so? it was asked. Unless a miraculous enlightenment was to be looked for between October and December, was there any alternative but civil war, and, in some way or another, overbearing the Lords? Civil war was out of the question for such a handful of obstructives. The King,

Question of a
creation of
Peers.

¹ Annual Register, 1831, p. 297.

Commons, and people could not be kept waiting much longer for the few who showed no sign of yielding; and it would be the best kindness to all parties to get the obstructives outvoted, by an exertion of that kingly power whose existence nobody disputed, however undesirable might be its frequent exercise. From day to day was this consideration urged upon the Premier, who never made any reply to it. It was not a time when men saw the full import of what they asked; nor was this a subject on which the Prime Minister could open his lips to deputations. He must have felt, like every responsible and every thoughtful man, that no more serious and mournful enterprise could be proposed to any Minister than to destroy the essential character of any one of the three component parts of the government; and that, if such a destruction should prove to be a necessary condition of the requisite purification of another, it was the very hardest and most fearful of conditions. Men were talking lightly, all over the kingdom, of the necessity of swamping the opposition of the Peers; they were angry, and with reason, with the living men who made the difficulty; and nobody contradicted them when they said that the extinction of the wisdom of these particular men in the national counsels would be no great loss: but they did not consider that the existing Roden and Newcastle, and Eldon and Rolle, were not the great institution of the British House of Lords, whose function shone back through the history of a thousand years, and might shine onwards through a thousand years more, if the ignorance and selfishness of its existing majority could be overcome on the present occasion by a long patience and a large forbearance. Lord Grey was the last man to degrade his "order," if the necessity could by any means be avoided. It was his first object to carry the reform of the Commons; but it would well-nigh have broken his heart to be compelled to do it through the degradation of the Lords. At this time, while, from his silence, multitudes believed what they wished, and confidently expected a large creation of Peers, it is now known that he had not yet proposed any such measure to the King.

One consequence of the prevalence of an expectation of a batch
 The of new Peers, was the parting-off from the obstructive
 Waverers. Lords of a large number who were called the Waverers. There is always such a set of people in such times; and greatly do they always embarrass the calculations of the best informed. These kept the issue in uncertainty up to the last moment. On the one part were the honest and enlightened Peers, who saw that the end of borough corruption was come. On the other part were the honest and unenlightened, or the selfish, who would not have our institutions touched on any

pretence whatever; and between them now stood the Waverers, hoping to keep things as they were, but disposed to yield voluntarily, if they could not conquer, rather than be put down by an incursion of numbers.

There was something unusually solemn in the meeting of Parliament on the 6th of December. It may surprise men now, and it will surprise men more hereafter, to remark the tone of awe-struck expectation in which men of sober mind, of cheerful temper, and even of historical learning, — that powerful antidote to temporary alarms, — spoke and wrote of the winter of 1831–2. A government proclamation, issued on the 22d of November, with the aim of putting down political unions, was found to be as ineffectual as such proclamations always are against associations which can change their rules and forms at pleasure. It appeared strange that the ministers should now begin to make war upon the unions, when their policy hitherto had been to let them alone; a policy befitting men able to learn by the experience of their predecessors in the case of the Catholic Association. There was a general feeling of disappointment, as at an inconsistency, when the proclamation appeared. It has since become known, that the Administration acted under another will than their own in this matter. In December, Lord Eldon¹ had an interview with the Duke of Wellington, of which he wrote, “I sat with him near an hour, in deep conversation and most interesting. Letters *that he wrote to a great personage* produced the proclamation against the unions. But, if Parliament will not interfere further, the proclamation will be of little use, — I think, of no use.” It was certainly, at present, of no use. The National Union immediately put out its assertion, that the proclamation did not apply to it, nor to the great majority of unions then in existence.² So there sat the monstrous offspring of this strange time, vigilant, far-spreading, intelligent, and of incalculable force, — a power believed in its season to be greater than that of King, Lords, and Commons: there it sat, watching them all, and ready to take up any duty which any one of them let drop, and force it back into the most reluctant hands. A dark demon was, at the same time, brooding over the land. It chills one’s heart now to read the cholera proclamations and orders of that year, and the suggestions of Boards of Health, to which men looked for comfort, but from which they received much alarm. Men were not then able to conceive of a mild plague; and what they had heard of the cholera carried back their imaginations to the plagues of the middle ages. Among many dismal recommendations from authority, therefore,

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 163.

² Annual Register, 1831, p. 297.

we find one which it almost made the public ill to read of,—that, when the sick could not be carried to cholera hospitals, their abodes should be watched and guarded, to prevent communication; that the word “SICK” should be conspicuously painted on the front of the dwelling, while there were patients there, and the word “CAUTION” for some weeks afterwards.¹ Men began to think of the nightly bell and dead-cart, and of grass growing in the streets, and received with panic the news of the actual appearance of the disease in various parts of the island at the same time. In the truthful spirit of history, it must be told that a large and thoughtful class of society were deeply moved and impressed at this time by what was taking place in Edward Irving’s chapel and sect. Men and women were declared to have the gift of unknown tongues; and the manifestations of the power—whatever in the vast range of the nervous powers of man it might be—were truly awe-striking. Some laughed then, as many laugh now; but it may be doubted whether any thoughtful person could laugh in the face of facts. We have the testimony of a man who could never be listened to without respect,—of a man whose heart and mind were not only naturally cheerful, but anchored on a cheerful faith,—as to what was the aspect of that season to such men as himself. In reply to some question about the Irvingite gift, Dr. Arnold² writes, “If the thing be real, I should take it merely as a sign of the coming of the day of the Lord,—the only use, as far as I can make out, that ever was derived from the gift of tongues. I do not see that it was ever made a vehicle of instruction, or ever superseded the study of tongues, but that it was merely a sign of the power of God; a man being for the time transformed into a mere instrument to utter sounds which he himself understood not. . . . However, whether this be a real sign or no, I believe that ‘the day of the Lord’ is coming,—that is, the termination of one of the great *aiōnes* [ages] of the human race: whether the final one of all or not, that, I believe, no created being knows or can know. The termination of the Jewish *aiōn* in the first century, and of the Roman *aiōn* in the fifth and sixth, were each marked by the same concurrence of calamities, wars, tumults, pestilences, earthquakes, &c., all marking the time of one of God’s peculiar seasons of visitation. . . . My sense of the evil of the times, and to what prospects I am bringing up my children, is overwhelmingly bitter. All the moral and physical world appears so exactly to announce the coming of the ‘great day of the Lord,’—that is, a period of fearful visitation, to terminate the existing state of things,—whether to terminate the whole existence of the

¹ Order in Council, Oct. 20, 1831

² Life of Dr. Arnold, i. pp. 302–3.

human race, neither man nor angel knows,—that no entireness of private happiness can possibly close my mind against the sense of it.” Thus could the thoughtful—active in the duties of life—feel at this time; and, when men of business proposed to each other any of the ordinary enterprises of their calling, they were sure to encounter looks of surprise, and be asked how any thing could be done while the cholera and the Reform Bill engrossed men’s minds. At the same time, London was overhung with heavy fogs; and that sense of indisposition was prevalent,—that vague restlessness and depression,—which are observable in the seasons when cholera manifests itself.¹ When the King went down to the House, to open the session Opening of the session. on the 6th of December, it was observed that he did not look well; and the topics of the speech—the disputed Bill, the pestilence, the distress, the riots—were not the most cheerful. It was under such influences as these that parties came together in Parliament, for what all knew to be the final struggle on the controversy of the time.

On the 12th of December, Lord John Russell moved for leave to bring in a new Reform Bill.² It was to be not less Third Reform Bill. efficient than the last, and the few alterations made tended to render it more so. There was now also a new census,—that of the year then closing; so that the census of 1821, with all the difficulties which hung about it, might be dismissed. The Bill was read a first time. The debate on the second reading began on Friday the 16th, and was continued the next evening, concluding early in the morning of Sunday the 18th, when the majority was 162 in a House of 486. The majority was a very ³ large one; and ministers might rest on that during the Christmas recess: but the spirit of opposition to reform in general, and to this Bill in particular, was growing more fierce from day to day.

The House met again on the 17th of January, and on the 20th went into committee on the Bill.⁴ It is amusing to read the complaints of the anti-reformers about being hurried in committee,—as if the provisions of the Bill were perfectly new to them. Some changes had been introduced since the long summer nights, of which so many had been spent in the discussion of the measure, ~~and these—the mainly to the use of the new census—were~~ considered with all possible dilatoriness. By no arts of delay, however, could the minority of the committee protract its sittings beyond the 9th of March. The report was considered on the 14th. When, on the 19th, the third reading was moved for, Lord Mahon, seconded by Sir John Malcolm, made the last effort employed in the House of Commons against the Bill. He

¹ Hansard, ix. p. 1.³ Hansard, ix. p. 651.² Hansard, ix. p. 156.⁴ Hansard, ix. p. 651.

moved that it should be read that day six months; and a debate of three nights ensued, — worn out as all now felt the subject to be. Worn out as all felt the subject to be, there was a freshness given to it by the thought that must have been in every considerate mind, that here the people's representatives were ending their preparations for a great new period; that they had done their share, and must now await the doubtful event, — the one party expecting revolution if the Bill did become law, and the other if it did not. All felt assured that they should not have to discuss a fourth Bill, and that the issue now rested finally with the Lords. At such a moment, the words of the leaders are weighed with a strong interest.¹ “At this, the last stage of the Reform Bill,” said Lord Mahon, “on the brink of the most momentous decision to which, not only this House, but, I believe, any legislative assembly in any country, ever came, — when the real alternative at issue is no longer between reform or no reform, but between a moderate reform on the one hand, and a revolutionary reform on the other, — at such a moment, it is with feelings of no ordinary difficulty that I venture to address you.” Lord John Russell's closing declaration, when the last division had yielded a majority of 116, in a House of 594, was this: “With respect to the expectations of the government, he would say that in proposing this measure they had not acted lightly, but after much consideration, which had induced them to think, a year ago, that a measure of this kind was necessary, if they meant to stand between the abuses which they wished to correct, and the convulsions which they desired to avoid.”² He was convinced, that, if Parliament should refuse to entertain a measure of this nature, they would place in collision that party which, on the one hand, opposed all reform in the Commons House of Parliament, and that which, on the other, desired a reform extending to universal suffrage. The consequence of this would be, that much blood would be shed in the struggle between the contending parties, and he was perfectly persuaded that the British Constitution would perish in the conflict. I move, sir, that this Bill do pass.”³ It passed; and then “the next question, ‘That this be the title of the Bill, — A Bill to amend the Representation of the People of England and Wales,’ was carried by acclamation. Lord John Russell and Lord Althorp were ordered to carry the Bill to the Lords, and to request the concurrence of their lordships to the same.”⁴

Final passage
through the
Commons.

When they discharged their errand, three days afterwards, — on Monday, March 26, — they were attended by a large number of members of their own House. The first reading in the Lords

¹ Hansard, xi. p. 414.

³ Hansard, xi. p. 855.

² Hansard, xi. p. 780.

⁴ Hansard, xi. p. 858.

took place immediately; and the second, which was to be a period of critical debate, was fixed for the 5th of April, but, ^{First reading} for reasons of convenience, did not begin till the 9th. ^{in the Lords.} Already, on this first night, there was a defection of waverers from the late majority, — several Peers intimating their intention of voting the Bill into committee; some in hopes that it might be improved there into something good, and others because there was now less danger in passing the Bill than in refusing it.¹ This conduct, after the anti-reformers had strained every nerve to bring up before the King's face all the opposition that could be aroused throughout the British islands, — Lord Roden having presented at the levée on the 28th of February a petition against reform, signed by 230,000 Irish Protestants, — discouraged some members of their Lordships' House, and exasperated others;² so that the conflict of passions within the House was almost as fierce as between their House and the unions. The Duke of Buckingham did what he could to accommodate matters all round, by promising that, if their lordships would throw out the Bill on the second reading, he would himself immediately bring in a Reform Bill, by which representatives should be given to all the large towns, and some consolidation of boroughs be effected.³ Absurd as was the supposition that the country would give up its own Bill for one from the Duke of Buckingham, the incident is worth noting as a proof that the high Conservatives were giving way, — were surrendering their main arguments of antiquarian analogy, and becoming eager to avow themselves reformers.

The deepest anxiety that had yet been felt was about the division on the question of the second reading in the Lords. The stanch Tories saw that it was "too clear," as Lord Eldon said, that their own party would split on this question, and that then it was to be feared the Bill would pass. The reform lords saw that another triumph of their opponents would be the doom of their House; while they were by no means sure that the Bill would pass even in case of victory now; for the event would be determined by the waverers, who could not be depended on at the last moment. The debate extended over the nights from the 9th to the 13th of April. It was bright morning on the 14th when the votes were taken. The lights had grown ^{Debate and} yellow and dimmer in the fresh daylight, the faces of ^{division.} the wearied legislators had appeared more and more haggard and heated; and, at last, the slanting rays of the morning sun shone full in upon the woosack, as the keen eyes of the Chancellor shot their glances, as wakeful as ever, from under the great wig. The attendance of strangers was as full as it had been twelve hours

¹ Hansard, xi. p. 861-864.² Autobiography of a Working-man, p. 241.³ Hansard, xii. p. 1.

before; for it was not a scene which men would miss for the sake of food and sleep. It was a quarter past seven on Friday morning when the House adjourned, after yielding a majority of nine to the Administration.¹

In a few hours, lists were handed about which showed how the minority of forty-one of six months before had been changed into a majority of nine. Seventeen Peers had turned round.² Twelve who had been absent before, now voted for the Bill; and ten who had voted against it before, now absented themselves. Among the twelve were the Archbishop of York, and the Bishops of London, St. David's, Worcester, and Chester. Among the ten was the Bishop of Peterborough. It was the bishops who saved the Bill this time; but their deed did not restore the credit their order had lost in October.

The Easter recess, which postponed the meeting of the Houses till the 7th of May, now afforded time for the people to apply

Pressure from that "pressure from without" which might be necessary to prevent the waverers from spoiling the Bill in committee.

This "pressure from without" was spoken of by the Peers with an abhorrence and contempt in which it is impossible for any one who appreciates their function not to sympathize. But they had brought it upon themselves; and now they must bear

Meetings and petitions. it. The Birmingham Political Union met on the 27th

of April, and invited all the unions of the counties of Warwick, Worcester, and Stafford, to congregate at Newhall Hill in Birmingham, on the day of the re-assembling of Parliament. Monster meetings were held in all the large towns, and monster petitions sent to the King to yield to the necessity for creating more Peers. The Edinburgh meeting, 60,000 strong, was held before the windows of Charles X. at Holyrood; and there he saw the spectacle of an orderly assemblage met to express their concord with their sovereign, and their determination to aid him in obtaining for them the rights to which he was able to see that time had given birth.³ The cheering of that multitude for "King William, the Father of his country," must have gone to the exile's heart. The petitions to the King and the Lords from Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, Dundee, and indeed from every populous place in the land, were in exactly the same strain, and nearly in the same words. That from Birmingham implored the Peers "not to drive to despair a high-minded, generous, and fearless people, or to urge them on, by a rejection of their claims, to demands of a much more extensive nature, but rather to pass the Reform Bill into a law, unimpaired in any of its great parts and provisions." The National Union, on the 3d

¹ Hansard, xii. p. 452.

³ Spectator, 1832, p. 410.

² Annual Register, 1832, p. 146.

of May, spoke out plainly enough. Its petition informed the Lords, that, if they denied or impaired the Bill, "there was reason to expect that the payment of taxes would cease, that other obligations of society would be disregarded, and that the ultimate consequence might be the utter extinction of the privileged orders." Among the serious and solemn petitions which it is a duty to place upon record, there was a fable put forth which should stand beside them, as having done as much for the great cause as any or all of them. It has passed into a proverb; but its original delivery should be registered, for the benefit of a far future. At a meeting at Taunton, a clergyman, who felt himself equally at home and free to speak the truth among Peers and cottagers, after declaring in regard to the bishops that he "could not but blush to have seen so many dignitaries of the Church arrayed against the wishes and happiness of the people," went on to say: "As for the possibility of the House of Lords preventing ere long a reform of Parliament, I hold it to be the most absurd notion that ever entered into human imagination.¹ I do not mean to be disrespectful, but the attempt of the Lords to stop the progress of reform reminds me very forcibly of the great storm of Sidmouth, and of the conduct of the excellent Mrs. Partington on that occasion. In the winter of 1824, there set in a great flood upon that town; the tide rose to an incredible height; the waves rushed in upon the houses, and every thing was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm, Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused. Mrs. Partington's spirit was up; but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic Ocean beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or a puddle, but she should not have meddled with a tempest. Gentlemen, be at your ease; be quiet and steady. You will beat Mrs. Partington."

The congregation of the unions at Birmingham, on the 7th of May, composed the largest meeting believed to have been ever held in Great Britain.² The numbers did not fall short of 150,000. The hustings were erected at the bottom of the slope of Newhall Hill, in a position so favorable, that the voices of most of the speakers reached to the outskirts of the great assemblage, and to the throngs on the roofs of the surrounding houses. The unions poured in upon the ground in one wide unbroken stream, till the gazers were almost ready to ask one another whether this was not a convention of the nation itself. At the sound of the bugle from the

¹ Sydney Smith's Works, iii. p. 123.

² Spectator, 1832, p. 439.

hustings, silence was instantly produced ; and Mr. Attwood, the chairman, announced to the assemblage the object of the meeting, — to avow the unabated interest and resolute will of the people in the cause of reform, and their determination to support their excellent King, and his patriotic ministers, in carrying forward their great measure into law. While the chairman was speaking, the Broomsgrove Union, which arrived late, was seen approaching from afar. Their assembled brethren greeted them with the Union Hymn, — deserving of record from being then familiar to every child in the land. It never was so sung before, nor after ; for now a hundred thousand voices pealed it forth in music which has never died away in the hearts of those who heard it. Seventy-four members of the Society of Friends — men of education, who had just joined the union on principle — might now know something of the power of music. A different order of men, who could not be on the ground, — some soldiers of the Scots Greys, who had quietly joined the union, — must have listened from within their barracks with a longing to be on the hill. The Duke of Wellington was reckoning on their services to finish the business, after all ; but the hymn seems to tell that the warlike intentions were wholly on one side.

UNION HYMN.

Lo ! we answer ! see, we come,
Quick at Freedom's holy call :
We come ! we come ! we come ! we come !
To do the glorious work of all ;
And hark ! we raise from sea to sea
The sacred watchword, Liberty !

God is our guide ! from field, from wave,
From plough, from anvil, and from loom,
We come, our country's rights to save,
And speak a tyrant faction's doom.
And hark ! we raise from sea to sea
The sacred watchword, Liberty !

God is our guide ! no swords we draw,
We kindle not war's battle-fires ;
By union, justice, reason, law,
We claim the birthright of our sires.
We raise the watchword, Liberty !
We will, we will, we will be free !

Spirit-stirring as this was, a more solemn manifestation followed, — the plighting of their faith by these hundred thousand earnest men. “ Here,” said one of the speakers, Mr. Salt, “ I call upon you to repeat, with head uncovered, and in the face of heaven and the God of justice and mercy, the following words, after me.” Every man bared his head, and, with the true Anglo-Saxon spirit swelling at his heart, uttered slowly, one by one, as they were given forth, these words : “ With unbroken faith,

through every peril and privation, we here devote ourselves and our children to our country's cause."

On this same 7th of May, the Duke of Wellington was beginning to see how the hope of such multitudes as this was likely to be foiled, and relying confidently on the Scots Greys in their barracks for putting down this particular multitude, if it should prove troublesome. Mrs. Partington was going to her cupboard, to bring out her mop. On this same 7th of May, the Lords, on re-assembling after Easter, went immediately into committee on the Bill; and, as their first act, overthrew the Administration. Before the echoes of the hymn had well died away at Birmingham, before the tears were well dried which the plighting of the faith had brought upon many cheeks, the Lords in London had decided, by a majority of thirty-five against ministers, ^{Defeat of min-} and on the motion of Lord Lyndhurst, to postpone ^{isters.} the disfranchising clauses, going first to the consideration of the new franchises.¹ When Lord Grey moved to have the business stand over till the 10th, he was taunted with a desire to delay the Bill. Lord Ellenborough "could assure the noble Earl and their Lordships, that, from the side of the House on which he sat, there was no wish whatever to interpose any delay to the adjustment of the measure."² He went on to intimate that he was ready to proceed with a very large measure of reform. As, however, he had given no notice of any reforming intentions, and as the ministers found themselves in a minority of thirty-five on the very first clause, Lord Grey persisted in asking for and obtaining an interval of three days.

Within those three days, it became known that the division on the Monday night, the 7th, was the result of an intrigue which had been going on for many months. The King's personal intercourses had been throughout with some of the highest Conservatives in the country, rather than with his ministers and their connections. He was old, and very dependent on the ladies of his family; he was no statesman; and he had no knowledge of the mind and condition of the people, except through those who surrounded him. His wife, some of his daughters (the children of Mrs. Jordan), and his sisters, were opposed to the new measure, and were kept in constant alarm by their Conservative friends; and they fed the King's mind with apprehensions which unfitted him for the discharge of his duty towards his ministers and his people.³ Lord Wharnccliffe, as representative of the anti-reforming Lords, had engaged to Lord Grey, at the beginning of the winter, that the Bill should be carried through the second reading if no new Peers were made; and accordingly the King was not asked

¹ Hansard, xii. p. 724.

² Spectator, 1832, p. 429.

³ Hansard, xii. p. 728.

to create Peers. That the whole business was to be overthrown in committee, and when, was certainly known in Edinburgh beforehand, when the ministers themselves were in the dark as to what was likely to happen.¹ Orders had also been issued from the Horse Guards for all the officers on furlough to join their regiments before this critical week; and every preparation that could be made by the Duke of Wellington for putting down risings of the people was made. During this week, orders were sent down to the barracks at Birmingham that the Scots Greys should be daily and nightly booted and saddled, with ball-cartridge ready for use at a moment's notice.² The Conservatives were determined that there should be a revolution rather than that the Reform Bill should pass.

The people were, however, too strong and too determined to render a revolution necessary. They were indignant on behalf of the ill-used ministers; indignant at the weakness of the King; indignant at the meddling of the royal ladies; and in the last degree indignant at the intrigues of the Tory leaders: but they knew their strength to be so great that they had only to put it forth peaceably to subdue the adverse faction by a manifestation of will, instead of by force of arms. A nobler scene was never enacted by any nation than that of the nine days' waiting while the country was without a government.

On the morning of Tuesday, the 8th, a Cabinet Council was held, when it was determined to request from the King a creation of Peers sufficient to carry the Bill. The two highest officers of the realm, the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor, went to Windsor, to make this request. As none of the three persons present were likely to report what passed in this interview, it cannot be spoken of with any certainty; but a morning paper³ which professed to have information, declared that the King wept, and lamented that he must sacrifice his ministers to his wife, his sisters, and his children. The ministers ^{Resignation of ministers.} tendered their resignations. On Wednesday morning, a special messenger brought a letter from the King, accepting the resignations of the Cabinet. The King came to town the same morning, to hold a levée; and he then formally received the resignations of the whole Administration, with those of their friends in the royal household. The Whigs made a complete clearance, leaving not a single official, of any rank, about the King. They had done with the business; and they left a clear field for the anti-reformers. The Duke of Wellington afterwards spoke of his fruitless enterprise of the next nine days as an act of gallant devotedness, in which he was willing to sacrifice him-

¹ Spectator, 1832, p. 429.

² Autobiography of a Working-man, p. 244.

³ Morning Chronicle.

self rather than desert his sovereign in an hour of perplexity and distress. It might be so; and the Duke might easily be too much feared, and too much respected, by the intriguers, to be invited to their counsels; but the blame of the royal perplexity and distress should rest where it is due. It was not the King who was deceived and deserted, but his ministers. The honor and fidelity were all on their side; and, if the Duke of Wellington went in to the rescue, it was on the appeal of a sovereign who had weakly deserted his faithful advisers and servants, and given himself into the hands of persons no less weak, who had brought him into a difficulty from which they could not rescue him. If he had refused to aid his sovereign, the Duke said he "should have been ashamed to show his face in the streets."¹ He endeavored rather "to assist the King in the distressing circumstances in which he was placed;" meaning, however, by these "distressing circumstances," the advice of Lord Grey to create Peers, and not the position of humiliation, in regard to Lord Grey, in which a clique of helpless advisers had placed the sovereign. On the Wednesday evening, the ministers announced to the two Houses their relinquishment of the government of the country; and, on the Thursday, the Commons, on the motion of Lord Ebrington, addressed the King, deploring the retirement of the late Administration, and imploring his Majesty to take none for his advisers who would not carry the reform measure unimpaired, and without delay.² It was on this occasion that Mr. Baring declared himself "entirely ignorant of the cause which had led to the extraordinary resignation;" a statement which first occasioned loud laughter, and then called up Lord Althorp to make an explanation, which was listened to in breathless silence, as he spoke with the calmest deliberation and the strongest emphasis. The moment he had uttered the words, there was "a burst of cheering, by far the most enthusiastic, universal, and long continued, ever witnessed within the walls of Parliament."³ Lord Althorp's words were, "I have no objection to state, that the advice which we thought it our duty to offer to His Majesty was, that he should create a number of Peers sufficient to enable us to carry the Reform Bill through the other House of Parliament in an efficient form." The same advice was now tendered to the King by the Commons in the address passed this night; and he did not feel himself at liberty to neglect it, even while placing himself in the hands of anti-reformers. "His Majesty insisted," declared the Duke of Wellington, a week later, "that some extensive measure of reform—I use His Majesty's own words—should be carried."⁴ But the Duke was

¹ Hansard, xii. p. 997.² Hansard, xii. p. 787.³ Times newspaper, May 11, 1832; Hansard, xii. p. 805.⁴ Hansard, xii. p. 996.

opposed to all parliamentary reform. What was to be done? The Duke proposed a compromise. He proposed to set aside the question of an "unconstitutional" creation of Peers by granting a measure of reform "moderate" enough to be passed by the Lords. He could not himself take office in any Administration which would undertake even this; but he would rescue the sovereign from his difficulties by making up a Cabinet for him,—taking measures meantime for the safety of the country. Such

Attempt to form a Cabinet. was the extraordinary task which the great soldier undertook with the idea of serving his King and country; and very hard he worked to fulfil his duty. For

five days he went about from door to door among his Tory friends; but, from first to last, in vain. He had Lord Lyndhurst, the active spirit of the whole transaction, to help him; but there Failure. was no anti-reformer except Lord Lyndhurst who could be found to undertake to carry "a large measure of reform;" and on the 15th, the Duke was compelled to announce to the King that all his attempted negotiations had failed.¹

During this interval, the nation was as busy as the Duke. As the news of the division on the night of the 7th spread through the country, men found themselves unable to give their minds to their affairs till the suspense should be relieved. The Agitation throughout the country. mail roads were sprinkled over for miles with people who were on the watch for news from London; and the passengers on the tops of the coaches shouted the tidings, or threw down handbills to tell that the Ministry had resigned. Then was there such mourning throughout England as had not been known for many years. Men forsook their business to meet and consult what they should do. In some places, the bells tolled; in others, they were muffled. In many towns, black crape was hung over the signs of the King's head; and there was talk of busts of Queen Adelaide being seen with a halter round the neck. These vain shows, however, did not suit the temper of earnest and efficient Reformers, who did something better than mourn and threaten. While they went to their serious work, there was much for the mere observer to note and remember: the full streets,—for everybody was abroad, from a desire for news, and because it was difficult to sit still at home; the wistful faces of little children, who saw that something fearful was going on, but could not understand what; and, above all, the close watching of the soldiery, wherever there were barracks; for the prevalent expectation now was, from the intimacy between the Duke of Wellington and the King, that a military control was to be attempted. It has since become certain that there were just grounds for this apprehension.

¹ Hansard, xii. p. 999.

The political unions met early and continually. The National Union declared itself in permanent session; 1500 new members — all men of substance — entered it in one day. Its watchword was, "Peace, Order, Obedience to the Law." It passed a resolution, "That whoever advises a dissolution of Parliament is a public enemy." As soon as the news reached Manchester, a petition to the House of Commons was prepared, praying the House to grant no supply till the Bill was passed unimpaired; and this petition had received in four hours the signatures of 25,000 persons, and was despatched to London in the hands of three eminent citizens.¹ This petition was the first of a large number which, within a few days, urged the same demand upon the House. The Bolton petition was signed by 20,300 within two or three hours.² After reading the Manchester petition to the House, Mr. John Wood, who presented it, declared, "The whole of the north of England, the deputation from Manchester informed him, was in a state which it was impossible to describe. Dismay, and, above all, indignation, prevailed everywhere. He believed, however, if the House did its duty, that the country might yet be saved: if it would not, he believed the people knew their duty; and, if the House would not stop the supplies, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whoever he might be, would very soon find that his coffers were un replenished. Whether such a line of conduct might be right or wrong, it was not for him to argue then; but it was his duty, as a reformer, to state his firm conviction, that, if a borough-mongering faction should prevail, the people would take the most effectual mode of stopping the supplies, by telling the tax-collector to call upon them when the Reform Bill had passed into a law." So much of this kind of statement was offered in the House, the petitions against votes of supply were presented and received with such hearty concurrence, that it became a question everywhere what the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst could possibly propose to do with the House of Commons. The present House would certainly never yield up the reform measure; and if, as was reported and believed, the present Parliament was to be immediately dissolved, there could be no doubt that the people would return an overwhelming majority of reform members in the new elections.

The Common Council of the city of London were among the petitioners to Parliament to refuse the supplies: they declared that all concerned in stopping the passage of the Reform Bill were enemies to their country; and they appointed a permanent committee, to sit from day to day, till the measure should be secured.³ The Livery of London, assembled

¹ Hansard, xii. p. 877. ² Hansard, xii. p. 878. ³ Annual Register, 1832, p. 170.

in Common Hall, adopted exactly the same course. There can be no doubt that both bodies held themselves ready to communicate and co-operate with the political unions which were expected to march up to London, in case of a prolongation of the struggle. Some of the smaller unions discussed plans of marching peaceably to the metropolis, and bivouacking in the squares,—there to wait till the Reform Bill should become law. The great Birmingham Union, now 200,000 strong, was to encamp on Hampstead Heath, or perhaps Penenden Heath, in order to incorporate with it bodies coming from the south. On the movements of this Birmingham Union, which had so lately uttered its sublime vow under the open sky, all eyes were now turned; and there is reason to believe that what passed at Birmingham immediately determined the issue of this mighty contention.

Declarations began to appear in the Tory newspapers, that all reports of the disaffection of the Scots Greys at Birmingham were mere fabrications of the Reformers; and that it was a gross and scandalous falsehood that the Duke of Wellington could not rely upon the soldiery. These declarations immediately showed men that such things had been said, and that the reports were considered of importance; and most people believed that they were true. Revelations have since been made which show that there was much truth in them. There had been talk of “cold iron” on the Tory side, for some days; and the Duke of Wellington had been understood to stand pledged, since the 9th, “to quiet the country in ten days;” and an attempt at military government for the time was almost universally looked for.¹ What the Duke’s intentions were precisely is not known, and perhaps it will never be known; but circumstances have been revealed which show that his reliance at first was more or less on the soldiery; and that he was informed of the vain nature of his reliance immediately before he gave up his enterprise. The earliest hours of his negotiation were employed in sending out feelers of the disposition of the new police; and Colonel Rowan’s report was unsatisfactory. From two of the divisions the answer was, that, if it was intended for the police to act against the people, they could not be relied on. There were some among the soldiery who reported of themselves to the same effect, with the least possible delay, not even waiting to be questioned; and from a passage in a speech of a relative of the Duke of Wellington’s, on the 16th, it appears that the disinclination to oppose the people was concluded to be prevalent in the army. In the last preceding struggle, in October, the Duke of Wellington had said to Mr. Potter, of Manchester, who represented the determination of the working-classes to have reform, “The people

¹ Spectator, 1832, p. 442.

of England are very quiet if they are left alone; and, if they won't, there is a way to make them." In the opinion of his relative, Mr. Wellesley, member for Essex, he was now, on the 16th of May, finding himself mistaken. Mr. Wellesley "was sorry he had shown so much ignorance of the character of the British people, in supposing that they were not fit to be trusted with those liberties to which we, as reformers, say they are worthily entitled.¹ He had told him so often; and he was astonished that a man of such intelligent mind, — a man who had led them on through blood and battle, through danger to victory, — should have so mistaken the character of the British people, as to suppose that the red coat could change the character of the man, or to imagine that the soldier was not a citizen." Some of the yeomanry corps resigned during the critical interval; that of Ware being in such haste to declare themselves on the side of the people, that they assembled immediately on hearing of the retirement of the Whig Ministry, and informed the Marquis of Salisbury of their resignations, by sending them at midnight to Hatfield House.² Of all the forces in the kingdom, the soldiery at Birmingham fixed the most attention, because Birmingham was the foremost place in public observation; because the Duke must be able to rely on the soldiery stationed there at such a time, if on any; and because of the reports afloat that the Scots Greys would refuse to act against the people, if called upon.

The officers of the Birmingham Union knew that certain of the Scots Greys were on the union books. Letters were found in the streets of the town, which declared, in temperate language, that the Greys would do their duty, if called on to repress riot, or any kind of outrage, but that they would not act if called on to put down a peaceable public meeting, or to hinder the conveyance to London of any petition, by any number of peaceable persons. Some of these letters contained the strongest entreaties to the people of Birmingham to keep the peace, that they might not compel their sympathizing friends among the Greys to act against them. Letters containing similar avowals were sent to the King, to the Duke of Wellington, and to Lord Hill, at the war-office.³ We know this on the testimony of a private of the regiment, who avows himself a party in these proceedings, and who gives us the following clear and impressive account of his own view of the position in which he and his comrades stood; a view which he knew to be shared by many of his comrades, and which he took care should be well understood by the Duke of Wellington:⁴ "The duty of soldiers to protect property and

¹ Spectator, 1832, p. 462.

² Spectator, 1832, p. 462.

³ Autobiography of a Working-man, p. 248.

⁴ Autobiography of a Working-man, p. 249.

suppress riots expressed then were the opinions which I have since expressed. To write or say or think, that, in any case, we were not to do what we were ordered was a grave offence, nothing short of mutiny. I was aware of that grave fact. I remonstrated with the soldiers who had joined the political union, and succeeded in persuading them to recall their adhesion to it. With the same regard to my own safety, I never went near the political union. Had the time and the circumstances come for us to act according to our design and judgment, and not according to orders, it would have been an occasion great enough to risk all that we were risking. It would have been a national necessity. We would have either been shot dead, or triumphant with a nation's thanks upon our heads. For either alternative, we were prepared." This state of preparation being made known at head-quarters, on the one hand, and by the whole people of Birmingham and the midland counties, through the newspapers, on the other, all plans of military coercion in that neighborhood were clearly frustrated.

The first probation of these soldiers was on the Sunday after the Newhall-hill meeting. At all times hitherto, the barrack-yard had been the resort of people who liked "to see the Greys;" and, on the preceding Sunday, "there were upwards of 5000 people within the gates, most of them well-dressed artisans, all wearing ribbons of light blue knotted in their breasts, indicating that they were members of the political union."¹ On the next Sunday, the scene was different indeed. The gates were closed; the soldiers were marched to prayers in the forenoon; and their occupation for the rest of the day was rough-sharpening their swords on the grindstone. This was at the time that they were kept supplied with ball-cartridge, and booted and saddled day and night. They were kept so close within their walls at present, that they did not know, with any precision, what was going forward; but their impression was,—and the impression soon became a rumor,—that the Birmingham Union was to march for London that night, and that the Greys were to bar its progress. The doubt and dread were not lessened by the nature of their work. The purpose of rough-sharpening the swords "was to make them inflict a ragged wound. Not since before the battle of Waterloo had the swords of the Greys undergone the same process. Old soldiers spoke of it, and told the young ones. Few words were spoken. We had made more noise, and probably looked less solemn, at prayers in the morning, than we did now grinding our swords. It was the Lord's Day, and we were *working*."

The union did not start for London that night. It had to hold

¹ Autobiography of a Working-man, p. 244.

a meeting the next day. There were then 200,000 persons present. They resolved to pay no taxes till the Bill was passed; and they carried a declaration of unappeasable opposition to the faction which had misled the King, and of reasons why the nation should demand the removal of the Duke of Wellington from the royal counsels.¹ This declaration was to have been signed, after legal revision, by all the unionists in the kingdom; but it was not wanted, any more than the jagged swords of the Greys. The Birmingham Union met again on the Wednesday, for purposes of thanksgiving.

The debating of the newspapers, and of all assemblages of people, in public and private, as to whether it was or was not true that the army was not to be relied on, was fatal to all reliance on the army, and would have been, if every soldier in the kingdom had been precisely of the Duke's way of thinking. It must have been an extreme surprise to the great Captain to find already, that, if the people would not be quiet, there was *not* a way to make them so against their will. So it proved, however; and the end of it was, that, if the Duke would not be quiet, the people had found a way to make him so. On the second day after the grinding of swords,—on Tuesday, the 15th,—Lord Grey recalled. Lords Grey and Althorp intimated to the two Houses the joyful news, that communications were renewed between the sovereign and themselves, which rendered it expedient to adjourn till Thursday.² The words were scarcely uttered, before there was a rush from the Houses to spread the tidings. There was no electric telegraph then; but the news flew as by electric agency. By breakfast-time the next morning, placards were up in the streets of Birmingham; and presently the people thronged to Newhall Hill, after bringing Mr. Attwood into the town. As by an impulse of the moment, a minister present was asked to offer thanksgiving; and that prayer, that devout expression of gratitude for their bloodless victory, and their privileges as exulting freemen, was felt by the throng to be a fitting sequel to their last week's solemn vow.

It must be some days before the facts could become perfectly known, or the future certainly anticipated; but men felt secure enough of the result to begin to return to their business. There had been a run on the Bank of England to the extent of above 1,000,000*l.* in small sums.³ Now, this began to flow back again; the weaver stepped into his loom; the blacksmith blew up the fire of his forge; the husbandmen parted off into the fields; and the merchants of London ceased to crowd the footways of Lombard Street all day long.

¹ Spectator, 1832, p. 462.

² Hansard, xii. pp. 982-989.

³ Spectator, 1832, p. 465.

In forty-eight hours more, there was a rumor in London, that, by some means unknown, the Peers had been induced to yield. What the conjuration was which brought about such a marvel was not understood at present; except that some unusual exertion of his personal influence had been made by the King. That the good behavior of the Peers was not absolutely assured seemed to be shown by the care with which Lord Grey and his colleagues evaded the question, whether they had received any pledge about a creation of Peers. By acute observers, it was supposed that some method of warning or persuasion had been used by the King; and that he held himself ready, in case of its failure, to create Peers to the extent necessary for carrying the Bill. This proved to be the truth. The first expedient was successful; and it is entertaining now to see, on looking back to that date, how credit is taken by the Lords who now yielded to King's appeal this final appeal, for having "saved the peerage, with to the Peers. what else was left of the constitution."¹ The final appeal to the Lords — the last practical acknowledgment of their free-will — was in the form of the following circular letter, dated from St. James's Palace, May 17, 1832: —

"MY DEAR LORD, — I am honored with His Majesty's commands to acquaint your Lordship, that all difficulties to the arrangements in progress will be obviated by a declaration in the House to-night, from a sufficient number of Peers, that, in consequence of the present state of affairs, they have come to the resolution of dropping their further opposition to the Reform Bill; so that it may pass without delay, and as nearly as possible in its present shape. I have the honor, &c.²

HERBERT TAYLOR."

This, which was called the King's letter to the waverers, removed all difficulties. It was dated on the Thursday; and, on that night, the Duke of Wellington made his explanation of the transactions of the preceding week, retiring from the House when he had finished, and absenting himself during all the remaining discussions of the Reform Bill. About 100 Peers went out with him, and absented themselves in like manner. Progress of the Bill. On the next Monday, the 21st, the Peers resumed the discussion of the Bill in committee, the Duke of Newcastle protesting against their assuming such an appearance of free-will as this, and desiring that they would read through the whole Bill at once, and pass it as quickly as possible, — as men acting under open compulsion. The first division took place the next night, on the question of the separate representation of the Tower Hamlets, when the anti-reformers exhibited their

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 178.

² Annual Register, 1832, p. 187.

largest minority, — 36 to 91. But this disheartened them; and, on the next night, only 15 were present. On Thursday, the 24th, 23 were present. On Wednesday, the 30th, the disfranchising sections of the Bill were gone through, — the tenderest points where all was painful. These sections were read through with little discussion, and no real opposition; and, on the same night, the committee finished its business. On the 1st of June, the report was received, — 18 Peers recording their dissent in a protest. On the 4th, Lord Grey was ill; but he went down to the House to move the third reading of his Bill. Unfit for exertion as he was, he was called up by an attack on the Administration from Lord Harrowby. When he sat down, it was suddenly, from inability to stand and speak; but his last words on parliamentary reform, though not designed to be the last, were a fitting close to the testimony of his whole political life: ¹ “He trusted that those who argued unfavorably of the Bill would live to see all their ominous forebodings falsified, and that, after the angry feelings of the day had passed away, the measure would be found to be, in the best sense of the word, conservative of the constitution.” The majority were 106; the minority, 22. The question, “That the Bill do pass,” was put, and carried; and then a great number of congratulating Peers gathered about the venerable Minister, who had so majestically conducted to fruition a measure which he had advocated before many of the existing generation of legislators were born, and through long years of discouragement, which ordinary men would have taken for hopelessness.² The Commons next day agreed to the few amendments proposed by the Lords, which left untouched the disfranchising and enfranchising clauses; and, on Thursday, June 7, the Reform Bill became law, ^{its passage into law.} the royal assent being given by a commission, consisting of the Lord Chancellor, the Marquises of Lansdowne and Wellesley, and Lords Grey, Holland, and Durham.³

It is not to be supposed, that, when Lord Grey received the congratulations of his friends, there was no melancholy mingled with his satisfaction, or that he had no sympathy with the stoutest of his opponents. The provocation caused by the long resistance of the Peers to a necessary change, might naturally blind the people at large to a portion of their case, and might urge the most lordly of the ministers themselves into a state of popular feeling, at which they might afterwards stand surprised. But Lord Grey was too much of a man, too much of a scholar, too much of a Peer, not to feel and remember, that, by the passage of this act, the ancient glory of the House of his order

¹ Hansard, xiii. p. 368.

² Hansard, xiii. p. 374.

³ Spectator, 1832, p. 529.

was declared to have departed. The change could not be prevented. It was rendered so imperative by time, that the course of wisdom was clear, — to acquiesce in the change, and to obtain the utmost possible good out of the attendant circumstances. But, however anxious to put an end to the abuses of borough corruption, and the interference of Peers with popular representation, such a man as Lord Grey could not but remember the ancient days when the Lords of the realm were the Parliament of the realm, — when there was no middle class, and the Peers were the protectors of such popular interests as existed then: he could not but remember the majesty of his House during the centuries when the popular element was advancing and expanding; and, though that House had of late fallen from its dignity, — become adulterated in its quality, and disgraced by too much of ignorance and sordidness in its self-will and its claims, — it still was the British House of Peers, which was now overborne and humbled, and made conscious that it existed no longer as a vital part of the English constitution, but for the sake of decorum and expediency. It was natural for the people — the large majority of whom contemplate the present and the future in all their interests — to enjoy the signal proof now given of the continuous rise and expansion of the popular element in the nation; but the most that could be expected from Lord Grey was to perceive and provide for the fact in the noblest and the amplest manner. His associations were too much concerned with the past to admit of his rejoicing with an unmingled joy. Many of us who rejoiced without drawback at the time, and held the strongest opinions of the folly and selfishness of the Tory Peers, can now see that they really were much to be pitied; that it was true that “the balance of the constitution was destroyed;” and that the change was something audacious and unheard of. In as far as these things were true, the Conservative Peers had a claim to the sympathy of all thoughtful persons in their regrets. Their fault and folly lay — that fault and folly which deprived them of popular sympathy — in supposing that the operations of time could be resisted, and their own position maintained, by a mere refusal to give way. They lost more than they need have done by a foolish and ungracious resistance, which served but to complete and to proclaim their humiliation. It is a fact not to be denied, that, as the kingly power had before descended to a seat lower than that of Parliament, the House of Peers now took rank in the government below the Commons. It will ever stand in history, that the House of Commons became the true governing power in Great Britain in 1832; and that, from that date, the other powers existed, not by their own strength, but by a general agreement

founded on considerations as well of broad utility, as of decorum and ancient affection. In so far as the House of Peers was now proved to be destined henceforward — as the royal function had for some time been — to exist only by consent of the people at large, it might be truly said, that the constitution was destroyed; and the Prime Minister who had conducted the process could not be insensible, even in the moment of his triumph, to the seriousness and antiquarian melancholy of the fact, however convinced he might be of the historical glories which were to arise out of it.

By the Reform Bill, as passed, the representative system of the British Islands became this:¹—

In England, the county constituencies, which had before been 52, returning 94 members, were now increased by the division of counties to 82 constituencies, returning 159 members. In Ireland, there was no change. In Scotland, the number of constituencies and members remained as before; but some shifting took place to secure a more equitable representation. The great increase in the county representation is the chief of those features which would soon cause the measure to be called — as Lords Grey and Althorp predicted — “the most aristocratic measure that ever passed the House of Commons.”

Substance of
the Reform
Bill.

All boroughs whose population was, according to the census of 1831, under 2,000, were disfranchised. Fifty-six English boroughs, which before returned 111 members, were thus extinguished as constituencies. Such boroughs as had a population under 4,000, and had hitherto returned two representatives, were now to have one. These being thirty in number, thirty members were thus reduced. The united boroughs of Weymouth and Melcombe Regis were now to send two members instead of four; and thus was the total reduction of 143 old borough members provided for.

As the total number of representatives was not to be altered, as decided by the House of Commons; the 143 were to be distributed over new or newly arranged constituencies. New and large constituencies in England and Wales received 63. The metropolitan districts and other boroughs with a population of 25,000 and upwards, were now to return two members each; and these took up 22 more. The remaining 21 were to be returned by 21 boroughs, whose population amounted to 12,000 and upwards. In Ireland, the increase of the representation was only from 35 to 39 members; with an additional member given to Dublin University. In Scotland, there was much redistribution of the franchise, and change in the formation of constituencies.

¹ Polit. Dict. i. p. 585.

cies; and the number of town representatives was raised from 15 to 23.

There was much changing of boundaries where a population had grown up outside the old limits, and fixing of limits to the boroughs which had a large new population.

Improvements were made in the practice of issuing writs for new elections, and in the conduct of elections, by the ordaining of convenient polling districts, and the shortening of the time of polling in contested elections. The term of fifteen polling days in county elections was shortened to two in England, Wales, and Scotland, and five in Ireland; and, instead of the old process of scrutiny, which occasioned endless delays and vexations, there was to be henceforward only a comparison of the voter's statement as to name and qualification with his description in the register.

In the great matter of the qualification of voters, it was thought impossible to avoid compromise; and some provisions therefore exist which everybody understands must be got rid of sooner or later. The old "freemen" were permitted to remain among the qualified, the condition of residence being imposed, and all being excluded who had been made freemen since March, 1831; the fact being notorious, that a multitude of such voters had been created by the corporations, for the sake of defeating the reform measure. The new borough franchise rested on the basis of inhabitancy. Inhabitants of abodes — whose various kinds are specified — of the yearly value of 10*l.*, become electors, provided they comply with all conditions of registration, payment of rates and taxes, and length of residence. The privileges of out-voters were abolished entirely, the elector being able to vote only in the place where he resides, or where he has property in land or houses of the required amount. In Ireland, great changes were occasioned by this fixing of the franchise, as the corporations there had been excessively corrupt in the use of the large powers of which they were now deprived. In Scotland, the franchise was at once, and for the first time, put into the hands of the true constituency, while the town-councils were deprived of the powers which they had grossly abused.

As for the county franchise, it was extended by admitting copyholders and leaseholders, and even, under some circumstances, occupiers, to the franchise, which was before confined to freeholders, to the value of 40*s.*; while freeholders were prevented from voting in both county and borough elections. The most unfortunate part of the Bill clause was that proposed by the Marquis of Chandos, by which tenants-at-will in the counties, occupying at a yearly value of 50*l.*, have the franchise. By this provision, the power of the great landed proprietors over their

tenantry is perpetuated; and hence arises a greater frustration of the purposes of the act than from all other errors and faults together. The county franchise in Ireland was so resettled in 1829 as to be little affected by the present act; such alteration as there was being the admission of certain copyholders, leaseholders, and occupiers. By the new arrangements, the county constituency in Scotland was much enlarged.

As for the qualification of the representative, disabilities on account of profession, — as the clerical, — and the holding of modern offices under the Crown, and of situations of government emolument, remained much as before. Disabilities on account of religious opinion had been already almost entirely abrogated. The qualification for an English, Welsh, and Irish member remained as before in regard to property, — namely, a clear estate of 600*l.* a year for a county seat, and of 300*l.* a year for a city or borough seat. The property qualifications were not extended to Scotland at the time of the union; nor were they by the new act. A qualification was formerly required for a Scottish elector which is not necessary for a Scottish representative now.

Such was the Reform Act of 1832, by which the landed interests were brought down some little way from a supremacy which had once been natural and just, but which had ^{What the Bill is, and is not.} now become insufferably tyrannical and corrupt. As the manufacturing and commercial classes had long been rising in numbers, property, and enlightenment, it was time for them to be obtaining a proportionate influence in the government. By this act they did not obtain their due influence; but they gained much, and the way was cleared for more. Great as was the gain thus far, there was a yet mightier benefit in the proof that the will of the people, when sufficiently intelligent and united, could avail to modify the government through the forces of reason and resolution, without violence. This point ascertained, ^{State of public interests.} and the benefit secured, all subsided into quiet. Trade and manufactures began immediately to prosper, credit was firm, and the majority of the nation were in high hope of what might be expected from a government which had begun its reforms so nobly, and promised many more. There were some, and not a very few, who declared that the sun of England had set for ever; but yet nobody could see that it was growing dark. Men in general thought, that, if they had ever walked in broad daylight, it was now.

The King was presently pitied and pardoned, as an old man, called late to the throne, — more amiable than enlightened, and entangled between public duty and private ^{The King.} affections, which had been brought by the fault of others into contrariety; but, as was fitting, he never recovered his original

popularity. When the Reform Bill was once secure, men no more carried a black flag, with the inscription, "Put not your trust in princes:" nor a crown stuffed with straw, with the inscription, "Ichabod:" but neither did they rend the clouds again with cheers for their "King William, the Father of his country." There was no longer any thing to fear from him; but men saw that neither was there any thing to hope from him: and he was thenceforth treated with a mere decorum, which had in it full as much of compassion as of respect.

The Admin-
istration.

As for his ministers, they were idols, aloft in a shrine.

CHAPTER VI.

WHILE the Reform Bill was in progress and in jeopardy, little else was thought of; except, indeed, the new plague which had come to overcloud all hearts, and to attract to itself some of the terror which would otherwise have been given entire to the apprehension of coming revolution. There were many in those days who would have been intensely grateful to know, first, that the cholera would have departed by a certain day, leaving them and their families in safety; and next, that revolution — by which they understood the overthrow of the whole social fabric — would not happen in their lifetime. If they could have been assured of these two immunities, they would have been quite happy, would have believed their way was clear for life, and that affairs would remain in their existing state as long as their own generation had any concern with them. Very different from this view was that taken by braver spirits, with that truer vision given by courage and enlightenment. “The truth is,” wrote Dr. Arnold¹ in April, 1831, “that we are arrived at one of those periods in the progress of society when the constitution naturally undergoes a change, just as it did two centuries ago. It was impossible then for the King to keep down the higher part of the middle classes; it is impossible now to keep down the middle and lower parts of them. . . . One would think that people who talk against change were literally as well as metaphorically blind, and really did not see that every thing in themselves and around them is changing every hour by the necessary laws of its being.”² “There is nothing so revolutionary, because there is nothing so unnatural and so convulsive to society, as the strain to keep things fixed, when all the world is, by the very law of its creation, in eternal progress; and the cause of all the evils of the world may be traced to that natural but most deadly error of human indolence and corruption, — that our business is to preserve, and not to improve.”

Such was the view taken, and maintained at first with some consistency, by the Ministry which came into power in November, 1830. They saw that a new period had arrived, from which

¹ Life, i. p. 294.

² Life, i. p. 281.

great changes must take their date. They saw what opposition would be raised by those who feared change; and what difficulties by a host of sufferers from existing evils, or unreasonable expectants of impossible good. They could laugh when Sydney Smith said, in a speech on the Reform Bill:¹ "All young ladies will imagine, as soon as this Bill is carried, that they will be instantly married. School-boys believe that gerunds and supines will be abolished, and that currant-tarts must ultimately come down in price; the corporal and sergeant are sure of double pay; bad poets will expect a demand for their epics; fools will be disappointed, as they always are." Ministers might laugh at the expectations of the fools and school-children; but they were aware that a multitude of evils, which must be redressed now and obviated for the future, must be dealt with in another manner than the sufferers themselves had any idea of, or were at all likely to approve. Not only had they to carry through some arduous work in which they were supported by the demand and the sympathy of a majority of the nation; they had also much to do which was not less imperatively demanded, but in doing which they must adopt methods which their supporters had to be taught to understand. To appreciate their position, irrespective of the Reform Bill, let us briefly survey the state and prospects of the country when Lord Grey and his friends came into power.

The much-dreaded cholera proved the smallest of the prominent evils of the time. Its first assault was the most violent; and then it attacked few but the vicious, the diseased, and the feeble; and it carried off, in the whole, fewer victims than many an epidemic, before and since, which has run its course very quietly. Before its disappearance from the United Kingdom, in fifteen months, the average of deaths was one in $3\frac{1}{4}$ of those attacked; and the total number of deaths in and near London was declared to be 5275.² No return was obtained of the number in the kingdom. When it is remembered how many deaths happened in the noisome places of our towns, and in damp nooks of wretched country villages, and in the pauper haunts of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and among the starving Irish, it is clear that the disease could hardly work any appreciable effect in the open places, and among the comfortable classes of the kingdom. If a person of rank or substance, or in healthy middle age, was attacked here and there, it was spoken of as a remarkable circumstance; and the cholera soon came to be regarded as a visitation on the vicious and the poor. Happily, the preparations which depended on the apprehensions or the benevolence of the rich were made before that change in the

¹ Works, iii. p. 133.

² Cholera Return, 1832.

aspect of the new plague, — the cleansing and whitewashing, — the gifts of clothing and food ; and the impression was made on all thoughtful minds, that improved knowledge and care on the subject of health were the cause of our comparative impunity under the visitation of this plague, and that a still improved knowledge and care were the requisites to a complete impunity hereafter. Though our progress from that day to this has been slower than it ought to have been, the awakening of society in England to the duty of care of the public health must date from the visitation of the cholera in 1831–2.

The state of the rural districts was fearful at the time of the accession of the Grey Administration. Everybody knew about the rick-burning and machine-breaking ; and the thoughtless and narrow-minded called for soldiery and police, stringent laws and severe punishments. More thoughtful persons, however, looked also at the condition of the agricultural interest generally, — the complaints of distress, renewed from year to year, the increase of pauperism and poor-rates, and the growth of crime, as well as of misery ; and they saw that the evil was one which stringent laws and severe punishments could not cure, nor even reach. They saw that the real mischief lay in the antiquated and corrupted poor-law, which they knew to be what it was declared to be by a French commission sent over to inquire into its operation, — “the great political gangrene of England, which it was equally dangerous to meddle with and to let alone.” Under this system, in its union with the corn-laws, the condition and prospects of the country were truly such as to make sagacious statesmen tremble. No previous Administration had understood the mischief in all its extent and its bearings ; but the facts were, that, while rents were nominally very high, no landowner was sure of his income ; that the farmers were subject to fluctuations in their receipts, which discouraged all prudence and self-education for their business ; that land was badly tilled, or actually going out of cultivation ; that the quality of labor was deteriorating incessantly, from the practice of paying wages more and more out of the rates ; that the laborers were becoming more and more reckless and demoralized, as they came to form a huge pauper class ; that the honest and independent of their order were drawn down faster and faster into pauperism ; that the class of small shopkeepers were becoming, in increasing numbers, unable to pay rates, and compelled, instead, to apply for relief ; that country parishes were exhibiting themselves, with less and less shame, as scenes of unprincipled jobbing and scandalous vice, where every one who could, thrust his hand into the public purse, where the honest and independent became the victims of the knavish and reckless, where the un-

chaste might prosper while the chaste must starve, where the capitalists of the parish must sink under the coalition between the magistracy and the paupers, and where ruin impended over all. The amount of money expended for the relief of the poor in England and Wales had risen, in half a century, from under two millions to above seven millions per annum ; and this vast expenditure went to increase, instead of to relieve, the pauperism of the country. Here was this enormous tax, becoming ruinous by annual increase, less production from the land, less industry among the laborers, more vice, more misery, a great race of illegitimate children growing up, riots by day, fires by night, the stout heart of England sinking, and likely to be soon broken ; and all from the existence of a poor-law system for whose repeal or alteration there was no popular demand, while it was certain that every item of it would be clutched fast to the last moment by parties and persons the most difficult to deal with, from their lack of either enlightenment or public principle. Next to the reform question, the gravest which presented itself to the handling of the new Ministry was undoubtedly that of the poor-law.

If it was proposed to lighten the pressure upon the poor-rate by the resource of emigration, the question was, How was it to be done?—where were the people to go? The true principles of colonization were on the eve of being announced, but they were not yet understood ; and there was the story of the Swan-river settlement, new and disheartening, within every man's knowledge. The Swan-river settlement dates from 1829 as a British colony. The accounts given of the district on the western coast of New Holland by Captain Stirling, who became its first governor, caused the grandest expectations. And the fault of the failure did not lie in any deception about the natural advantages of the place. The fault was in ignorance of the first principles of colonization. Vast tracts of land were sold or granted to individuals. The colony was to be exempted, as a favor, from any importation of convicts. The settlers were to be allowed two hundred acres of land for every laboring man, woman, or child above ten years of age, that they should import into the colony ; and forty acres of land were given, up to the end of 1830, for every amount of 3*l.* imported into the settlement in any shape. Thus land superabounded in proportion to capital ; and the capital brought in, though so scanty in proportion to the land, abounded in proportion to the labor. The richest of the colonists could obtain no laborers ; and they sat down upon their lands, surrounded by their rotting goods, their useless tools, and the frames of houses which there were no hands to erect ; without shelter, and certain soon to be without food, if more labor could

not be obtained. Instead of more, there was daily less, as the few laborers who were on the spot made use of their first exorbitant earnings to possess themselves of enough of the cheap land to make them their own masters. Now it appeared that the secret of the success of other settlements, pitied for their liability to convict immigration, was in their convict labor; and the Swan-river colonists petitioned the government at home to send them convicts to save them from destruction. Some of the settlers wandered away, as they could find opportunity, to other colonies, stripped of every thing, or carrying the mere wrecks of their expensive outfit, and declaring of the famous Swan-river district, "It is a country to break one's heart;" and people at home heard such tales of perplexity and disaster as shook the popular confidence in emigration as a resource, and might well make the government hesitate in regarding it as a remedy, in any degree, for the intolerable pressure upon the poor-rate.

And what was the state of older colonies? The moral sense of the nation must be met in regard to the abolition of Slavery. slavery. From the time of the issue of the famous circular in Canning's day,—from the time that the cause of the negro had been taken up by the powers at home,—it was certain that a radical change must take place in the relation between the proprietors of men and their legal human property; and none who saw what a vast universe of morals lies above and beyond the range of the law could for a moment doubt what that change would be. But there were enough of men, as there are in every community, who see nothing above and beyond the existing law to make the process of change appear in anticipation very difficult and hazardous. Those interested in human proprietorship would perhaps no longer try to push Clarkson into the dock at Liverpool, or even dare to murder missionaries at such a distance as Demerara; but they had to be reminded that laws could be altered or abolished, and taught that eternal principles exist which compel the destruction of bad laws: and unwilling pupils like these are very slow at learning their lesson. This mighty work, of the abolition of slavery, lay clear before the eyes of the ministers, needing to be done, and soon. Another colony in the west—Canada—was in an unsatisfactory state; Canada. but the call for reform there appeared to be less pressing than it really was, and no adequate attention was given to it for yet a few years. As for our great Indian dependencies, India. there was no option about attending to them and their needs, for the company's charter was about to expire; but it was a question of mighty importance to future ages, as well as of vital consequence to many millions of living men, what the terms of the great East-India proprietorship or administra-

tion should be from this time forward : whether the new doctrine of commercial freedom should spread to the nations of the East, by our practice of it there ; or whether any of the time-hallowed monopolies of the most majestic of merchant companies should be contended for against the rising popular will.

Nearer home, there was that difficulty, without limit as to depth and extent,—the state of Ireland. The form in which the spirit of outrage now showed itself was opposition to the Church. It had become impossible to collect tithe in Ireland ; and men saw that to collect tithe in Ireland would never be possible again. Here was the insulted Church to be vindicated,—for there was as yet no debate whether to maintain it,—and, at all events, the starving Irish clergy to be succored ; many of whom had pawned or sold their furniture and clothes, and were working like laborers to raise potatoes to feed their children, or were thankful for the gift of a meal of porridge for their fami-

Tithes. lies from a neighbor. In England, too, in places where the clergymen were strict about their dues, an

imitation of Irish methods of dealing with tithe-collectors began to be heard of ; and the affair was becoming urgent. Chancery reform, and many improvements in our judicial system besides, were needed and demanded. The severity of our criminal law had been for many years condemned, and one relaxation after another had been procured ; but much more remained to be done than had yet been effected. The infliction of punishment was still perniciously uncertain, from the law ordaining severer penalties than the tribunals chose to inflict ; and a complete revision of the criminal law, in order to

Law reform. bring it into harmony with the spirit of a new age, was a great work pressing to be done. There was another noble task — new, beneficent, but not on that account the less urgently necessary — for which the nation looked confidently to the new Administration, and especially to the Henry Brougham who was so deeply pledged to the cause : the work of preparing a national system of education lay before the new rulers. The struggle and success of the people in the reform question was a plea for it ; the growing evils of the poor-law system were a plea for it ; the hope of the operative classes, and the despair of the rick-burners and the machine-breakers, were pleas for it. But these pleas, and all others, were in vain. It was not that Henry Brougham, during his four years of power, made efforts which were defeated, as efforts on behalf of education have been since, by sectarian or other differences : it was not here that the disappointment lay ; but in Henry Brougham never approaching the subject at all, during his four years of power. This affair lay before the new Administration, when they came

into office, with the others just enumerated; and it was the greatest of them all. It alone was left untouched, and must be omitted in the narrative of what was done between 1830 and 1834.

There was, besides, the currency question, sure to turn up, under all administrations, with every vicissitude of the national fortunes; and now more sure than usual from the approaching expiration of the bank charter. There was the usual eagerness everywhere for the reduction of taxation; and more than the usual expectation, from the confidence felt that a reforming Ministry would deal freely with sinecure offices and pensions which a Tory government could not be expected to touch.

The opportunity must be taken, while the spirit of reform pervaded the nation, and the enlightened will of the middle classes was in its completest union and vigor, to reform the municipal institutions of the country. A liberal Cabinet, anxious to raise the national mind and character by an extension of self-government, could not but know that it was as desirable to purify and enlarge municipal administration and powers as to amend the parliamentary representation. And this work, which would have been necessary if they had had nothing else to do than to carry parliamentary and corporation reform, was made yet more indispensable in their eyes by the necessity which they foresaw of introducing a principle and practice of centralization, new to administration in England, and requiring not only a careful watch over itself, but a set-off of enlarged local powers in some other direction. They foresaw that the perplexing and overwhelming task of poor-law reform could be accomplished no otherwise than by taking out of the hands of local administrators the powers which had been so long and so grossly abused, that the wisest and best individuals could not be the reformers of the system in their own neighborhoods, but only its victims. These powers must now be confided to some central body, and by them locally administered. Whether this necessity was a good or an evil one might be and was debated by the two orders of politicians by whom the great question of centralization and local administration is for ever debated; but while some insisted that business was much better done for the people when done by well-trained officials, sending out their functionaries from a central office, and others contended that no such advantages could compensate for the loss to the people of the habit and the privilege of managing their local affairs for themselves, the new government felt that a municipal reform, which should enlarge the local powers and public interests of the people, would be the best safeguard they could give against the possible evils of such cen-

tralization as they must establish in the prosecution of some other indispensable reforms.

Such was the series of works which lay before the new Ministry, when they should have accomplished their distinguishing achievement of parliamentary reform. The mere list is an indication that we have arrived at a new period of history, and that our method of narration must change accordingly. Hitherto, while governments went on, from year to year, legislating for the time, — adding, amending, abrogating, from session to session, as natural occasion arose, — our history could not but take something of the form of the chronicle, as it will again before its close. But at the incoming of a new period, so marked by a great act of regeneration or revolution, — whichever it may be called, — the chronicle method can do no justice to the matter to be conveyed. The story of the Reform Bill could not be fitly told but in regular sequence; neither can the story of the other reforms which it held in intimate relation. We have catalogued the ordinary stars as they set; but now that a magnificent new constellation appears in our political firmament, we must do something more than name the stars, and let them go down in the list. They must be signalized, so that all may know what has arisen. The story of these enterprises will therefore be given in sequence, after a glance at the condition of the new Administration, in regard to its powers and its impediments.

Lord Grey's Administration was strong in political character. All its members had been not only liberal while in opposition, but consistent for a long course of years in contending for the precise objects which they now came into power for the purpose of achieving. They were strong in the popular support from the beginning: this strength went on increasing during the two years occupied by the reform struggle, and the meeting of the first reformed Parliament; but it must, as every member of the government could not but know, end in weakness. The enthusiasm with which ministers were regarded in 1832 could not last. From the nature of the human mind, it must subside; and, when idolatry has once begun to decline, it is certain that the idol will soon be found to be clay. Lord Brougham was ridiculed for saying, after the meeting of the first reformed Parliament, that the government was too strong. Whatever was the sense in which he meant this, the event proved that it would have been better for the government not to have had so overwhelming a majority as they could number. A patriotic Minister wishes to have as strong an opposition as is consistent with the stability of his government, that his measures may be well sifted, and all objections considered before it is too late; and that he may thus share the responsibility of his acts

Strength of
the govern-
ment.

with his sharp-sighted opponents. This kind of aid and support from the foe was especially needed by the Whigs, from their inexperience in office, and their absolute lack of training for power. Thus was Lord Brougham justified in saying that they were too strong in the new Parliament; and five years afterwards, there was nobody who would not have agreed with him. At the moment, however, this popular support was a vast power for good. It fixed the kind-hearted but feeble King; it saved time when the pressure of work was extreme; and it saved the country from reflex agitation from the political storms on the continent.

Here, perhaps, ends the list of the powers of the new Ministry. They were representatives of liberal principles of policy; they stood high in political character, and were sustained by unequalled popular support. Some would have said beforehand, that they must be strong in the ability of the respective members; but it did not prove so. While there was not a man among them who might not have been called able in his way, there was no one of them of commanding ability in office,—no one great statesman. Lord Brougham was the man whose splendid talents were looked to for magnificent results: but he proved himself no statesman; and it was only because his supposed statesmanship was wanted, that he was raised to the woolsack, while known to be no equity lawyer. Some of his colleagues have since, after considerable training, shown high ability in office,—of which Sir James Graham is an eminent example; but this training was exactly that in which they were unavoidably deficient, while it was essential to enable them to work together, and to render their respectable amount of individual ability compensate for the absence of commanding power. This want of training and of business habits is particularly incapacitating in the case of men of aristocratic station, who, if they have not the discipline of official life, can hardly have any business habits or talents at all; and, again, the evil was here aggravated by the new ministers having, for the most part, spent their lives in opposition. Men in opposition inevitably form and utter rash judgments, from having only partial information on subjects of which they are called to judge. They inevitably commit themselves, so as to stand virtually pledged to courses of which they may think very differently amidst the lights of office. Thus hampered as to even the principles of much of the work to be done, they are in still greater difficulties as to the procedure.

Untrained as they were, it was absolutely necessary for the Whigs to retain the services of the underlings of former administrations. It was a bitter, a well-nigh fatal necessity; but a necessity it was. That men as new as their masters, clerks as

inexperienced in official routine as the ministers, could not have carried on the business of the departments, needs no showing. The men who were at the desks must be continued, in order to get through the work of every day. These men were of like politics with the late Administration; or rather, they were as much stronger in political opinion than their late *chefs*, as underlings are wont to be in proportion to their superiors: they were very confident that their late masters would soon come back again; and they regarded the new Whig rule as an irksome and vexatious interval between two organic periods of strong government. According to the testimony of the perplexed new ministers and their friends, the disasters from this cause were innumerable and very serious. They were misled, quizzed, kept in the dark, left unaided at critical moments; in short, served faithlessly, or not at all. It may be said, and it was said, that a great part of the capacity for government consists in securing good service. The Whig ministers pleaded that a man must himself understand the business he wants to have done before he can secure good service from fresh hands. However this may be, the fact was that they were incessantly complaining of hardship and misadventure from this cause. It is certain also, that their power, popularity, and usefulness were seriously impaired by the imperfection of the work they produced, and the flaws in the schemes they proposed. Perfection of detail might have sufficed in the absence of commanding ability of statesmanship, and commanding statesmanship might have overborne the impediment of imperfect routine execution; but here, where both the compensating powers were absent, it is a strong proof how enthusiastic was the national trust, that the Whig ministers were enabled to carry the noble series of reforms for which they have a claim to the acknowledgments of far future generations.

CHAPTER VII.

BEFORE the Wellington Administration went out, the House of Commons had resolved that a select committee should examine the civil list, in order to separate the proper expenditure of the Crown from a large and various expenditure of another kind, which ought to be under the control of Parliament, but was not so, from its coming arbitrarily under the head of civil-list expenditure. The King and his new ministers went heartily to work to carry out the pleasure of the Commons, and correct the abuses of the old system. The conduct of the sovereign on this occasion was very honorable to him. As an honest, plain-minded man, it was probably more satisfactory to him to have a certain defined income, paid and accounted for quarterly, than to be troubled with a dozen kinds of revenue, necessitating a vast complication of accounts, and causing him to be continually vexed with applications and complaints about pensions and fanciful claims, and harassed by periodical inquiries and censures in Parliament about the pension list. He might see how much ease and relief he would gain by turning over the whole business to Parliament for re-arrangement; but that he did see this from the station of the throne was such a proof of good sense, and the grace with which he surrendered every thing to the judgment of his ministers and Parliament was so entire, that his popularity was as much strengthened as it could be by any one act. He and the Queen relinquished all their annuities; and he placed at the disposal of his faithful Commons his whole interest for life in all hereditary revenues, droits of the Crown, and casual income from any source whatever, trusting to their judgment and affection to make sufficient provision for the dignity of the royal function, and for the comfort of himself and his consort.¹

Now was the time for the reformers and economists of the House to speak their minds about the pension list, and to learn all that could be told about it. From this time forward, there was to be no more mystery about the granting of pensions. The yearly amount was to be fixed; and all

¹ Hansard, i. p. 10.

secrecy was to be put an end to. There are many at this day who think it a matter of regret that the occasion was not used for establishing an honorable system of rewards for public service, not official, such as might befit a people now awakening to a sense of the value and dignity of science, literature, and art. For the best benefactors of society,—its sages, philosophers, authors, and artists, men whose pursuits are the least likely to obtain pecuniary recompense,—there is in England no appropriation worthy of government to offer, or of them to receive. The amount left at the disposal of the sovereign is destined for any kind or degree of real or imagined service, and is far too trifling to be of use in the encouragement of lofty pursuit, or the reward of exalted service. It has to be offered with an apology, and received with shame; and there are few of those whose claims are strongest, that would choose to receive as an act of favor or favoritism from the Minister that which they would regard as an honor and unmixed blessing if conferred by Parliament out of a liberal, appropriate fund. Here and there, at present, a great natural philosopher receives a pension which does not pay for his apparatus; and a poor author has a pittance which hardly provides him bread, fire, and candle, while he is penning his thoughts,—rendering services to the world which no money can ever pay; and such pensioners know that their names stand among some so unconnected with all proper purposes of a pension list, that the wonder is how they ever got there. It is not to the credit of England, and was not in 1831 an honorable result of sixteen years of peace, that hundreds of thousands of pounds should be annually appropriated for military and naval purposes, while only a pittance of a few hundreds was really disposable for honor and encouragement to the wisdom, knowledge, and ennobling arts by which the human race is, if at all, to be exalted above the liability to war. This was the proper opportunity for establishing a National Reward Fund; but it was missed, and the occasion has never been even looked for since.

The pensions charged on the civil list for England amounted at this time to 74,200*l.*; those for Scotland, to 31,222*l.*; those for Ireland, to 53,795*l.*—total, 159,217*l.*¹ All these were legally void by the death of the sovereign who had granted them; but there was no one who wished that they should not be renewed to the individual recipients, if the system of granting could be amended. It was now proposed to reduce the amount charged on the civil list to 75,000*l.* for the three countries together,—the amount to be made up by the oldest pensions on the list, in order that the King might have some power of bestowing grants before the end of his reign by the dying-off of the oldest pensioners.

¹ Hansard, ii. p. 154.

Parliament was to deal with the rest as it thought fit, after they had been transferred to the consolidated fund. This chief point, and some less disputed matters, being agreed upon, their Majesties' financial affairs stood thus: In return for all that they had surrendered, they were to receive, in quarterly payments, during the life of both, the sum of 510,000*l.*,^{Royal income.} under the five following heads:¹—

First Class,	For their Majesties' privy purse	£110,000
Second „	Salaries of His Majesty's household	130,300
Third „	Expenses of His Majesty's household	171,500
Fourth „	Special and secret service	23,200
Fifth „	Pensions	75,000
		£510,000

If the Queen survived her consort, she was to have an income of 100,000*l.*, and Marlborough House and Bushy Park for residences. This opening of a system of rational management of royal income and expenditure is worthy of record. The country had suffered much in purse and patience from the extravagance and debts of royal personages, and it is suffering even now; for there are tracts lying waste in our British-American colonies, not only useless in themselves, but a positive impediment to cultivation,—tracts made over by the Duke of York to certain jewellers and others, his creditors. Since the arrangement here chronicled, there have been no complaints of royal extravagance, no instances of royal debt; and, though we English do not admit that we are a nation of shopkeepers, it is certain that we have so much respect for high probity in money matters, as to feel that the honor of the Crown is eminently enhanced by the faultlessness of the last and the present sovereign in living within their incomes.

The alarming increase of pauperism throughout the kingdom has been noticed. This increase was complained of, ^{Pauperism.} and adverted to in terms of apprehension, year after year, in Parliament and elsewhere; and when the annual poor-rate exceeded seven millions, with a clear prospect of augmentation, men began to ask, in their clubs and by their firesides, where this was to end, and who could be sure of not sinking down from being a rate-payer to becoming a rate-receiver. Parliamentary committees were found to be useless. A more stringent search was needed than such a body could institute. In 1832, the Crown appointed a commission of inquiry, consisting of nine persons, among whom were the Bishops of London and Chester, under whose direction the condition of every parish in England and Wales was investigated and reported. (These reports, in their mass, and in the nature of their details, were enough to over-

¹ Will. IV. c. 25.

whelm any faculties, and to extinguish hope.) Those whose business it was to receive the documents and consider them, as they came in, week after week, for two years, could scarcely help regarding the nation as a group of people, some busy and some gay, on an island destined to be overflowed by the deep, and round whose whole circuit the waves were advancing, inch by inch, while only those who were immediately disturbed were fully conscious of the danger. There was one solid ground of hope, however, — one fixed point presented, — from which improvement might proceed. There were two or three parishes in England blessed with the presence of a sensible man, sagacious enough to see into the causes of parochial evils, and powerful enough to obviate them. To half-a-dozen quiet country residents like these, men aiming only to do the duty which lay before their doors, our country mainly owes its rescue from the most appalling danger which has ever threatened its social condition, and its comparative purification from the worst complication of vice, perhaps, ever caused by any institution, except that of slavery, for which she has in any age been answerable. The amount of rate was a broad fact which every man could understand, and which any one might know from the newspaper; but, fearful as it was, it was that which pressed least upon the minds of the commissioners and of those whom they admitted to a sight of the reports. Among a multitude of painful facts, the most mournful was the pervading and unceasing oppression of virtue and encouragement of vice. The poor-rate had become public spoil. The ignorant believed it an inexhaustible fund which belonged to them. To obtain their share, the brutal bullied the administrators; the profligate exhibited their bastards which must be fed; the idle folded their arms, and waited till they got it; ignorant boys and girls married upon it; poachers, thieves, and prostitutes extorted it by intimidation; country justices lavished it for popularity, and guardians for convenience. This was the way the fund went. As for whence it arose, — it came, more and more every year, out of the capital of the shopkeeper and the farmer, and the diminishing resources of the country gentlemen. The shopkeeper's stock and returns dwindled, as the farmer's land deteriorated, and the gentleman's expenditure contracted. The farmer's sons, waiting, at the age of five and thirty, for ability to marry in comfort, saw, in every ditch and field on the estate, lads under twenty whose children were maintained by the rates which were ruining their employer. Instead of the proper number of laborers to till his lands, — laborers paid by himself, — the farmer was compelled to take double the number, whose wages were paid partly out of the rates; and these men, being employed by compulsion on him, were beyond his control,

—worked or not as they chose,—let down the quality of his land, and disabled him from employing the better men who would have toiled hard for independence. These better men sank down among the worse; the rate-paying cottager, after a vain struggle, went to the pay-table to seek relief; the modest girl might starve, while her bolder neighbor received 1s. 6d. per week for every illegitimate child. Industry, probity, purity, prudence,—all heart and spirit,—the whole soul of goodness,—were melting down into depravity and social ruin, like snow under the foul internal fires which precede the earthquake. There were clergymen in the commission, as well as politicians and economists; and they took these things to heart, and labored diligently to frame suggestions for a measure which should heal and recreate the moral spirit as well as the economical condition of society in England.

To thoughtful observers it is clear, that the same grave aristocratic error which has before been adverted to—that of confounding in one all ranks below a certain level of wealth—was at the bottom of much poor-law abuse, as it has been of the opposition to its amendment. Confusion of poverty with pauperism. Gentlemen in Parliament who talk over poor-law matters, and gentlemen in the country who discuss and administer the law, and gentlemen of the newspaper press who desire, with real benevolence, to advocate the cause of the poor, have been too apt to confound under this name classes more widely distinguishable, in fact and in principle, than any other ranks in our society,—except only that of sovereign and subject. Except the distinction between sovereign and subject, there is no social difference in England so wide as that between the independent laborer and the pauper; and it is equally ignorant, immoral, and impolitic to confound the two. This truth was so apparent to the commissioners, and they conveyed it so fully to the framers of the new poor-law, that it forms the very foundation of the measure; and all effectual opposition to the working of the system since it became law has proceeded from blindness to this great fact and fundamental principle. Here are two classes to be dealt with,—the indigent, and the independent laborer, who, however oppressed by poverty, is a noble member of the state, and can lift up his head in the consciousness that he fulfils the part of a citizen, and is beholden to no man for a degrading charity. In the pauper class are many whom the State is willing to maintain, because they cannot maintain themselves,—the sufferers under helplessness, from whatever cause; and it included also, at the time of the reform of the poor-law, a much larger number who were not suffering under any natural or accidental helplessness at all. These were the people whom a hasty and ignorant humanity call “the poor,”

and for whose support and comfort they pleaded; pleaded as if that support and comfort were to come out of the pockets of the rich alone. Now, the very first aim of the commissioners was to consider the poor,—the independent and virtuous and most suffering poor. While magistrates were giving to pauper applicants at their own houses an additional loaf for every child, that loaf was provided by the more high-minded laborer, who toiled to raise the rate demanded of him, while he and his children were hungering together. Both the poor man and the pauper were to be cared for; but neither of them at the expense of the other. The law ordered, and it still orders, that every man shall be fed; but every law should provide, as all moral principle does, that the pauper, while supported by public charity, should be placed in a lower condition—if only that were possible—than the man who abstains from putting out his hand to the public purse. Clear as this principle is, and much as it has been preached since 1832, there is still existing a surprising blindness to it. Appeals on behalf of the pauper are incessantly made, in forgetfulness of that class of the poor which should be considered and cherished with all possible honor and care; and those who are engaged in thus considering and cherishing an all-important class in our State are reproached with hardness of heart towards the poor, on account of restrictions which are absolutely necessary as safeguards of the integrity of the people and the capital of the country. In the very few parishes where such restrictions had already been enforced, it was clear that justice and mercy were, as they must ever be, coincident. In those parishes, while all necessitous persons were relieved, idleness, and not industry, was discouraged; prudent marriage was not rendered impossible by a premium on profligacy; the land was not deteriorating, nor the capital of the district wasting away; farmers employed such labor as they wanted, and could choose it of a good quality; and the independent laborer was respected, while the pauper was pitied and fed.

Under the guidance of these few examples, and enlightened by a prodigious accumulation of evidence, the commissioners offered their suggestions to government; and a Bill New poor-law, 1834. to amend the poor-law was prepared, and proposed to the consideration of Parliament, early in 1834.

The first principle of the new law was that of the old,—that every necessitous person had a claim to relief. Its principles. The matter was to be much simplified now by the repeal of the worst restrictions of settlement. If one main object of the reform was to encourage industry, it was clearly desirable to remove the impediments to the circulation of labor. Settlement by hiring and service was to exist no longer; labor could freely

enter any parish where it was wanted, and leave it for another parish which might, in its turn, want hands.

In observance of the great principle, that the independent laborer was not to be sacrificed to the pauper, all administration of relief to the able-bodied at their own homes was to be discontinued as soon as possible; and the allowance system was put an end to entirely. The shameless petitioner was no longer to carry home so many shillings or loaves for so many children, while his more honorable neighbor not only went without, but bore part of the cost. Henceforth, the indigent must come into the workhouse for relief, if he must have it. There stood the great house, with shelter, clothing, and food for the destitute who chose to claim it; but, in justice to the independent poor and to society at large, there were conditions belonging to this relief which ought never to have been objected to by reasonable persons, however irksome they might and must be to the idle, dissolute, and extremely ignorant, who form a large proportion of the pauper class. One condition was, that the able-bodied should work, — should do a certain amount of work for every meal. They might go out after the expiration of twenty-four hours; but, while in the house, they must work. The men, women, and children must be separated; and the able-bodied and infirm. The separation of the men and women — husbands and wives among others — was absolutely necessary to common decency, in an establishment like a workhouse; and that of husbands and wives was required by every consideration of justice to the State, which could not rear a race of paupers within the workhouse, to the prevention of virtuous marriage without. That the aged and infirm should be separated from the able-bodied was necessary to their own quiet and comfort. Their diet included indulgences which others could not have; and the turbulence of sturdy paupers was no fit spectacle for them. That the children should be segregated was necessary to their moral safety and educational training. No part of the new law has occasioned more complaint and opposition than this workhouse classification; and no part is more clearly defensible from every point of view, or more evidently necessary. Because the workhouses could not be permitted to be rookeries for pauper families to roost in, they were called prisons; though every man could go out with his family any day, and was kept in only by the inducement of a maintenance. As for the effects of the separation and training of the children, a curious light is thrown upon the subject by a discussion which took place a few years after the reform was instituted, — a discussion among certain barristers on circuit, a large number of whom were dining together, when some circumstance led them to compare their observations on workhouse-

schools. From the encouragement given to dissoluteness by the old poor-law, the first series of children in the workhouses of some of the rural districts were almost all illegitimate. The question discussed by these barristers was, what the effect on the disrepute of illegitimacy was likely to be, in the course of another generation, of the manifest superiority of the children educated in the workhouses over those of the neighboring peasantry born in wedlock. The practical conclusion was, that the children of the independent laborers must be educated up to the workhouse schooling-point, and as much beyond it as possible.

In order to a complete and economical classification in the workhouses, and for other obvious reasons, the new ^{its} machinery. Act provided for unions of parishes, — the rating and expenditure of the rates remaining a separate concern. Thus, instead of half-a-dozen small, expensive, and ill-arranged establishments in as many different parishes, one central house, properly prepared for its purposes, would answer all objects, and be under a completely conspicuous management. To afford the necessary control over such a system, — a system so new and unwelcome to a host of local authorities and managers, — a central board was indispensable, by whose orders, and through whose assistant-commissioners, every thing was to be arranged, and to whom all appeals were to be directed. The central board was to consist of three commissioners; and the assistant-commissioners were at first twenty-one, diminishing to nine as the new organization was completed. No change was proposed in regard to the ratability of property, or the mode of collecting the rate. The business of the new Act was with the application of the rate when collected. The distribution was left to guardians and select vestries; and, in the absence of these authorities, to overseers. The discretionary power of magistrates was much contracted, none being left which could interfere with the main aim of the reform, — the subordinating the condition of the pauper to that of the independent laborer.

Of the changes proposed by the new law, none was more important to morals than that which threw the charge of the maintenance of illegitimate children upon the mother. Hitherto, the father had been made chargeable, upon the oath of the mother as to his paternity. It was now proposed, that the law should take no cognizance of the father at all. The Lords, however, modified this arrangement by giving an appeal to the quarter-sessions against the father. This appeal was rendered sufficiently difficult, to leave the practical operation of the law pretty much what it was intended to be, till a change was made in 1839, by which it was rendered more easy to reach the father. This change was occasioned by feelings of humanity, which many

wise persons still think misguided. When the law was framed, there was much wonder abroad, that the Bishop of London, and many moral and humane persons about him, and not a few thoughtful women, were in favor of an arrangement which left the father of an illegitimate child "unpunished," and threw the whole burden upon the mother. The Bishop of London and his coadjutors were presently proved to be right by the demonstration of facts. The decrease of illegitimate births was what many called wonderful, but only what the framers of the law had anticipated, from the removal of direct pecuniary inducement to profligacy, and from the awakening of proper care in parents of daughters, and of reflection in the women themselves. The first case or two occasioned a shock of surprise and dismay among those who had not understood the change in the law; and, after that, the offence seemed almost to disappear in some districts where before it had abounded. As for the thoughtful women who did not object to the new arrangement, their feeling has been nobly expressed by one of them — Mrs. Jameson — in a passage which will not be forgotten; a few sentences in which she indicates the benefit to the whole sex, when woman is made, even through apparent hardship, mistress of herself, — the guardian of her own mind and morals, instead of the ward of man.

Extracts from the reports had been given to the public from time to time, and all reasonable means used to prepare the mind of the nation for the new measure. Up to the last moment, it was impossible to conjecture how it would be received, and, therefore, how it would work; for there never was a measure which more absolutely required, for its successful working, the countenance and co-operation of the intelligent portion of society. One certain thing was, that the measure itself supposed and necessitated a repeal of the corn-laws; — by its alterations in the provisions of settlements, its general release of labor from thralldom, and its reliance on general laws; while there was too much reason to apprehend, that, carefully as this was explained and proved to the ministers, they would not admit it in Parliament, if they did in their own minds. The apprehension was but too well founded. Lord John Russell and Lord Althorp, who brought forward the measure in the Commons, presently after refused even to receive evidence regarding the operation of the corn-laws; and Lord Melbourne, Premier of the Administration which set the Bill to work, made a declaration in the Lords, — only less memorable than that of the Duke of Wellington against reform of Parliament, because Lord Melbourne was the lesser man, — that he had heard many mad things said in his life; but that the corn-laws could be repealed

was, before God, the very maddest thing he had ever heard. Yet the framers of the Poor-law Amendment Act knew, and always avowed to the Whig ministers, that the measure could never have a fair chance of working till the corn-laws were repealed; and, in the interval, they must pray for a succession of good harvests. On the occurrence of the first deficient harvest, it would probably be necessary — as they said in the freedom of conversation — to march soldiers to superintend the enforcement of the law. Nor did any condemnation of the measure lie in this assertion; for the state of things under the old law was so desperate, that any determination short of desperation in the enforcement of the Amendment Act might be a mere matter of prudence. Except for the complication of the corn-laws with this measure, there was nothing to make it a party affair. Everybody was suffering under the existing system; and, while the proposed reform was brought forward by a liberal Ministry, none were more eager for it than the landed interest, in and out of the House. If it was probable that the country justices would resent the restriction of their powers in their own province, it was certain that their neighbors, the farmers, — of the same politics, — were sinking under the burden of the rates, and would welcome any prospect of relief. As it was not a party matter, it was impossible to divine how the newspapers would go. The only thing considered certain under this head was, that the “Times” — the great paper of all — was wholly in favor of the reform. One of the editors had, a few days previously, sent a message declaratory of intended support to some of the managers of the measure. Up to the last moment, though the prospect was wholly uncertain, every thing looked well.

And at midnight of the 17th of April, every thing looked better still. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Althorp, had obtained leave from the Commons to bring in the Bill.¹ His speech, plain, earnest, and impressive, had produced a strong effect upon the House, and his proposal had been respectfully greeted and warmly supported. The members went home, feeling convinced that the evils of the poor-law system were virtually abolished, and that this “great political gangrene of England” was successfully dealt with at last. When each of them took up the “Times” from the breakfast-table, the next morning, to gratify himself with the study of its advocacy of the measure, — an advocacy sure to be more finely expressed than any that could be heard elsewhere, — what was the amazement to find a thundering article against the measure! It became known afterwards that the change in the mind of the “Times” had taken place at the very last moment. It was naturally declared and

¹ Hansard, xxii. p. 874.

believed to be owing to evidence received of the hostility of the country justices to the measure; and the country justices were not only the great provincial support of the "Times" newspaper, but composed an influence too important to be lightly regarded. Whatever might be the reason, the "Times" newspaper certainly did, at the last moment, change its mind about supporting the new poor-law. The fact,—of the suddenness of the change,—in connection with the temper of the new opposition, is worth noting, as illustrative of the character of newspaper support or opposition in our day. The side which the "Times" would take was a chance pregnant with good and evil consequences, which will influence the fate of whole generations. The hostility has been so venomous, so unscrupulous, so mischievous in one direction and so beneficial in others, so pertinacious, so vigilant, and so remarkably based upon the aristocratic error before alluded to,—of confusing all ranks below a certain level,—that it could not be passed over in the history of a time when the press is admitted to be our fourth estate.

Before London had breakfasted, a wealthy member of the Commons was in the city, with a friend, and had bought the "Morning Chronicle;" and comrades were beating about for writers of the leading articles,—writers well familiarized with the new measure. The consternation of the ministers was not small. There was to be a Cabinet Council that day; and the Lord Chancellor wrote a note to Lord Althorp, to insure his attendance, as it was to be considered whether the "Times" should be propitiated or defied. Some expressions were added, not very complimentary to the editor who had lately offered support. Some tidings having arrived from Lord Althorp which rendered the note unnecessary, it was torn up, and the scraps thrown among waste papers under the table. Some mischievous person picked them up, pasted them in order, and sent them to the person remarked on, who was not propitiated by what he read. From that hour, the virulence with which the leading paper pursued the Lord Chancellor, the new poor-law, and the parties concerned in its preparation, exceeded any hostility encountered by the Whig government from any other quarter, and certainly had no small effect in impairing their much-weakened influence and popularity, and in impeding the working of poor-law reform. The mischief done was by the dishonesty of the paper in constantly misrepresenting the enactments and operation of the new law; in imputing to it the faults of the old system, which it was actually in course of remedying; in fostering the prejudices, and perpetuating the mischievous powers, of the least enlightened of the country justices; in upholding the cause of the unworthy among the indigent, by confounding them with the

worthy among the poor ; in short, by a partial and unscrupulous and unintermitting hostility to a measure which had its faults, but which was not only necessary in its time, but an eminent glory of its time, and which it would have been a moral benefit to Englishmen to appreciate better than they have done. The good effected by this hostility has, on the other hand, been very great. Bad as has been its temper and principle, it has acted in the name of humanity, and it has done some of the best work of humanity. Nothing in the shape of an abuse, a hardship, or a levity in the treatment of the poor, has it ever let pass. It has incessantly been unjust, and more cruel than the persons and usages it denounced ; but it has induced a spirit of watchfulness and a sense of responsibility in official men ; it has evoked a spirit of humanity in society, for which the whole class of sufferers may be grateful, and for the sake of which the most feeling moralists may subdue their natural and well-grounded resentment, and cheerfully acquiesce in the results which will remain when the warfare and all its disgraces, on every hand, are forgotten.¹

On the 14th of August, 1834, the royal assent was given to the Poor-law Amendment Act, amidst prognostications of utter failure from the timid, and some misgivings among those who were most confident of the absolute necessity of the measure. These last knew that it was either now or never. When a member in the Commons complained of the short time allowed for the consideration of the Lords' amendments, Lord Althorp declared that he would be a bold man who should bring forward the Bill in another session, after it had once been dropped.² It is true, — and the fact was repeatedly brought forward in the course of the debate, — the abuses of the poor-law were almost all under forty years old ; and the present object was rather to restore the principle and revert to the operation of the law of Elizabeth than to establish a new system ; but still there was the great and fearful fact before all men's eyes of the demoralization of the peasantry ; of their moral and social state being so bad, in many parts of the country, that it was a grave question whether they could be retrieved. It must be now or never. It appeared from the reports, that a remnant still existed of the peasant order as it was before the corruption of the poor-law ; a few hearty old men between sixty and eighty, sprinkled through the country parishes, who had, for the forty years of misrule, talked of the good old times, and turned away from the pay-table with a disgust which would operate well now, while the new purification was going forward. Of these, there would be fewer every year ; and the advantage of their presence was certainly an additional

¹ Hansard, xxv. p. 1254.

² Hansard, xxv. p. 1221.

reason why the reform should not be delayed. The Bill became law; the law came into speedy operation; for a time, long enough to secure the reform, the seasons were ^{its passage.} kind, and events were favorable. Everybody was not convinced — and everybody is not convinced yet — of the blessedness of the retrieval we have enjoyed. There are many who charge upon the new law the abuses of the old, and the difficulties which attend upon the very institution of a poor-law; there are many who charge upon the law itself some gross faults in parts of its administration; there are many who will never be satisfied till every poor person is thoroughly comfortable in his own home, — a virtuous aspiration, but one not to be fulfilled by a poor-law of any nature; but there are also many who think, with a kind of shudder, what our condition would have been by this time under the old law, or a less stringent reform. The facts which all men might know, if they would, are, that before two ^{its operation.} years were out, wages were rising and rates were falling in the whole series of country parishes;¹ farmers were employing more laborers; surplus labor was absorbed; bullying paupers were transformed into steady working-men; the decrease of illegitimate births, chargeable to the parish, throughout England, was nearly 10,000, or nearly 13 per cent; clergymen testified that they were relieved from much of the pain and shame of having to celebrate marriages where the bride was on the point of becoming a mother, or where the parties were mere children, with no other prospect than the parish pay-table; and, finally, the rates, which had risen nearly a million in their annual amount during the five years before the poor-law commission was issued, sank down, in the course of the five years after it, from being upwards of seven millions to very little above four.² After that time, when a long period of severe distress ensued, the new law was found insufficient — pending the maintenance of the corn-laws, it must be remembered — to deal with the needs of our large manufacturing towns, as any other poor-law would have been. Of this we shall have to speak under its own date, as also of the changes found to be necessary in the application of the Amendment Act; but, from first to last, its operation in the rural districts has been not only salutary, but nothing short of salvation. This reform must ever be regarded as in the first rank of the honors of the Whig Administration, and of the pregnant victories of the peace.

The poor-law inquiry was not the only one which disclosed facts of guilt and misery in our social state which might have lain concealed under the excitements of war, but ^{Factory children.} which became gradually revealed amidst the quietude of peace.

¹ Second Annual Report.

² Penny Cyclopædia, art. Pauperism.

The poor-law commissioners had discovered how brutal and wretched was the condition of the children of rural laborers in too many districts of the country; of children who struggled with the pigs for food during the day,—doing nothing useful, learning nothing which raised them above the beasts of the field; and at night huddled down on damp straw, under a roof of rotten thatch; or went out to carry poached game, or fire the farmers' stacks. Another picture, equally mournful, was presented from the factory districts. Throughout the manufacturing districts, in ordinary years, there ought to be a sufficient provision for all who are not behind their times; like the poor hand-loom weavers, who would have power-looms put down, to give them work. Such cannot be effectually aided; but among other classes, if there were sense, knowledge, and goodness, there need have been no poverty at the time we speak of. This knowledge and goodness, however, are what the nation has taken no pains to cultivate in the mass, and to diffuse among the classes which are least able to desire them for themselves; and hence has arisen the misery, the unspeakable disgrace, of the corruption of the parental relation among large numbers of our people. At the time now under review, it became known that parents sold their children to excessive labor; and it has since become known, that a considerable number have sold them to death through the burial-clubs,—actually poisoned them for the sake of the burial-money, after entering the clubs for the very purpose. When Mr. Sadler and Lord Ashley brought forward the subject of the oppression of the factory children, in 1833, the question of legal protection to these children was as difficult a one as could be brought under the notice of any ministry and parliament. It is admitted by the most sagacious to be an insoluble difficulty. By guilty neglect we had brought ourselves into an inextricable embarrassment, which has become only more apparent, and not less perplexing to deal with, during all the discussion which has taken place from that day to this. Amidst much legislation which has been ventured upon, the question is apparently as far as ever from being settled,—the great question, whether effectual legislation is possible between parents and children, and in defiance of the great natural laws which regulate the operation of labor and capital. By our guilty neglect we had placed in abeyance the still greater natural laws of the human heart, which alone can overrule economical laws; and now we were reduced to try the fearful experiment, whether, by interposing thus late with feeble arbitrary decrees and arrangements, we were likely to mitigate or aggravate the existing evil.

Here were children—little creatures whose life should have been spent in growing, in body and mind—employed all day,

and far into the night, in the monotonous and stupifying work of spinning in the mills. Most of the mills were found to be fairly wholesome; the owners were not oppressors; the pay was good; the work was not in itself severe, or otherwise objectionable; and all representations of the case as, generally speaking, worse than this, were found to be untrue. But it was too true that the parents let out their children to that class of middlemen,—the spinners,—from whom neither the care of parents nor the consideration of educated masters was to be looked for; and the children were kept too long standing,—too long awake,—too long on the stretch over work which was not in itself of a hurtful nature. People who thought only of the children's instant welfare, and not of the considerations of justice and of actual practicability with which the case was complicated, clamored for a law which should restrict the hours of labor, and determine the ages of the persons who should be employed in the cotton and silk mills. Economists showed how vain had always been, and must ever be, laws to regulate labor and wages. Statesmen knew how vain it was to interfere by law with private relations; and the mill-owners complained of the injustice of arbitrarily raising wages; while this was exactly the prospect which delighted the operatives. They began to see before them a long perspective of legal protection and privilege, by which they as well as their children should obtain the same wages for less and less work; while too few of them perceived that any law which should deprive them of the free disposal of their own labor would steal from them their only possession, and be in fact a more flagrant oppression than any law had inflicted on their order for centuries. Such was the diversity of opinion in society in 1833, when a demand was made in Parliament for an act which should regulate the labor of children in factories. The ministers were fully aware of the difficulty in which they stood; and they endeavored to satisfy all parties, at the expense of the smallest amount of mischief. They sent out a commission to obtain evidence, and report.

When the time came for the commissioners to report and suggest, it was clear that their convictions were just what might have been expected. The evil of overworking children was clear. Though there were fewer swollen joints, shrunken limbs, and distorted spines, than had been represented, there was far too much of stunted growth, and far too little of the character of natural childhood, among those who were called "the victims of the factory system," but who were, in fact, the victims of their parents' poverty or heartlessness. But could a cure be found in a mere law? The commissioners thought not. They foresaw that there would be false swearing

about the children's ages, and deception in many ways that no law could obviate or detect; the parents, from whom children needed protection, being exactly those who would have least scruple about deception and perjury. But the commissioners had not to decide whether there should be a law or not. It was evidently settled that there should be one; and what the commissioners had to do therefore was first to suggest the best kind of law under the circumstances, and next to introduce and promote by it the measures in which they believed the remedy really to lie. About one of the remedies they could do nothing, — that free importation of food which ought naturally at once to accompany a free circulation of labor, and to obviate all restrictions on it. The next most important, the education of the children, they thought they could introduce under the head of factory arrangements. The measure of education would be but small, and its quality but poor, if instituted in a way so indirect as this, and as an ostensibly subordinate object; but the commissioners thought that any educational training was better than none, and that they could but try for this collateral success, convinced as they were that the measure must fail in its professed object. They therefore proposed that the children should be secured from working for more than half the day by being placed at school, and certified to be there during some hours of the other half.

The Factory Bill of 1833 has received so many alterations since, that it would be useless to give a minute account of its provisions. It is enough to say, that, except in silk-mills, no child under nine years of age was to be employed at all; children under eleven were not to be employed more than nine hours in any one day, nor more than forty-eight hours in one week; and, after a time, this provision extended to children under thirteen years of age.¹ School attendance was provided for, the cost — not to exceed 1*d.* in the 1*s.* — to be paid out of the child's wages, if the mill-owner desired it. Medical supervision was ordered; and four factory inspectors were appointed to watch over the operation of the act. This was the beginning of that legislation protective of factory labor which has gone on to this day; the opening of a great controversy which is far from being concluded, and whose consequences lie deep in a future which no man now living shall see.

¹ Polit. Dict. ii. p. 3.

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE were two matters of great importance which must be considered at this time, whoever might be in or out of power, and whatever might be happening, at home and abroad. The two great charters of the India Company and of the Bank of England were to expire in 1834, and it must be timely determined whether they were to be renewed, and on what conditions. As has been notified, a parliamentary committee had already been appointed, and had begun its work of inquiring into the claims and affairs of the India Company. On the 22d of May, 1832, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed a similar inquiry in regard to the Bank of England. This last committee was, however, a secret one, for the obvious reason Renewal of the bank charter. that disclosures on currency subjects, for a succession of months, with uncertainty at the end of it, would embarrass all commercial transactions. The committee sat, and diligently pursued its inquiry during the rest of the session, offering its report on the 11th of August. This committee was appointed on the fifth day after the return of Lord Grey and his colleagues to power; and it began its abstract and passionless work while words were running high in the other House between Lords Kenyon and Grey, and while the remnant of anti-reforming Peers were undergoing defeat as often as they adventured a division on the clauses of the Reform Bill. Such were the days when the bank committee sat, and when the very eminent men who were in it were preparing a report of extraordinary value. They felt the seriousness of their work; and well they might. The last renewal of the exclusive privileges of the bank had taken place in 1800, when the term assigned was a year's notice after the 1st of August, 1833; and, during that interval, what vicissitudes and alarms had taken place,¹ — what warnings of the disastrous nature of errors in currency matters, and of the magnitude of the interests now to be involved in an engagement for another term of years! The distresses of 1814, the crisis of 1819, and the crash of 1825-6, were fresh in the recollection of several members of the committee, and a matter of deep interest to all; and,

¹ M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, p. 66.

under this stimulus, they so exerted themselves that their report is considered—in connection with the evidence on which it is founded—the most important instrument towards the establishment of sound principles of banking as yet offered to the government and people of England. Among others, there were on the committee, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Poulett Thomson, Sir Henry Parnell, Mr. John Smith, Mr. Baring, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Bonham Carter, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer,—statesmen, financiers, economists, and practical men of business.¹ What they had to investigate was this: whether the paper money of London should be limited to the issues of one bank, or whether a competition of issues should be allowed; whether all the exclusive privileges of the Bank of England were necessary, supposing it to be still the only bank of issue in London; and what checks were desirable to secure the public from danger from banks of issue; and, especially, whether a periodical publication of accounts would be a benefit or a disadvantage.² On these points, the committee gave a vast amount of information, without any imposition of decided opinions of their own. They did all that time and circumstances allowed in laying before Parliament the fullest materials for a judgment, and in venturing to reveal the exact state of the affairs of the Bank of England, thereby breaking up the system of mystery which had hitherto been one of the dangerous privileges of the bank corporation. Up to this date, the directors had preserved the most cautious secrecy about their affairs, declaring dividends, year after year, upon their own arbitrary judgment, without any sanction of publicity. Now, however, the House of Commons printed the report of the secret committee; and it was understood that darkness would never again be allowed to settle down on the transactions of the great corporation.

A new charter was granted, terminable “at any time upon twelve months’ notice, to be given after the 1st of August, 1855;” and the privileges of the bank might cease sooner, upon the fulfilment of certain conditions by the country; one of which was the repayment by Parliament of upwards of eleven millions, owing by the public to the bank.³ The bank retained, under the new charter, the chief of its old privileges; and one principal new advantage in a restriction on all other banks, having more than six partners, from issuing notes or bills within sixty-five miles of London. A great convenience was also afforded to the bank by its notes, and the notes of its branches, being made a legal tender everywhere but at the bank and its branches. By this provision, the bank was saved the expense, inconvenience,

¹ Hansard, xii. p. 1363. ² Report of Secret Committee, August 11, 1832.

³ Polit. Dict. i. pp. 265–267.

and risk of having to keep up, all over the kingdom, stocks of bullion to meet any run which might occur in any direction, at any time. There was some alarm at first among half-informed people about this provision, which was regarded as countenancing a sort of inconvertible paper-currency; but the holders were in fact in exactly the same position as before in regard to the convertibility of the notes, while new facilities were, at the same time, added for obtaining cash in any of its forms from the bank, by the establishment of new branches. All branch notes were made payable only at their place of issue. Weekly returns of bullion and of notes in circulation were to be sent in to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to publication in the "London Gazette," — a provision of publicity which has worked so well as to be carefully renewed, after ten years of trial. One-fourth of the debt due from the public to the bank was immediately paid, by an assignment of stock previously held by the commissioners of the national debt. In consideration of its new privileges, the bank was to deduct 120,000*l.* per annum from its charge for the business of conducting the national debt affairs. At the time of this inquiry, the total receipts of the bank for the year were 1,689,176*l.*, and its expenses somewhat under 500,000*l.*; leaving 1,164,235*l.* to be divided among the proprietors. The establishment employed about 1000 persons, and supported 193 pensioners; the average receipts of the 1000 functionaries being 225*l.* each, and those of the pensioners 161*l.* each. Such were the state and constitution of the Bank of England on the granting of the new charter of 1834. It will be seen hereafter how the never-ceasing changes of commercial affairs, and the imperfection of the best knowledge on the great subject of the circulating medium, compelled in ten years a remodelling of the constitution of the bank, with a provision for another change, if necessary, in ten years more. For these further arrangements, an essential preparation was made by the new provision for publicity; by the establishment of more branches, with better security against a disastrous local drain; and by the thought and knowledge brought to bear upon the subject in the investigations and discussions of 1832 and 1833.

A more striking change than any in the constitution of the bank could be to society at large took place at the India Company's charter. For nearly two centuries and a half, the merchant-vessels of the East-India Company had traversed the seas, before the eyes of the world. This magnificent association had formed the link between the barbarism of the past and distant, and the civilization of the future in its home; and now it was to be quietly let drop as useless, — the East and the West having come into a communication which should now be left

free. The commerce of this corporation, which had once been altogether a facility, had become a monopoly; and the changes of centuries required that it should be broken up. So the company remain princes, but no longer merchant-princes. About a quarter of a century before the time now under notice, a Liverpool merchant, the most honored of his class, Mr. William Rathbone, was in London; and, struck with the spectacle of the company's shipping, he inquired of a London merchant at his elbow, why such a trade — a trade so great, and so capable of unlimited expansion — was quietly left to be the property of a corporation. His friend replied by convincing him of the overwhelming power of the company in London, under whose shadow no discontent could stir with impunity; and the two agreed, that, whenever any movement was made, it must be in the provinces. Mr. Rathbone was not a man to loiter over any work which he saw ought to be done. He stirred up Liverpool, Glasgow, Paisley, and Manchester, to demand an opening of the trade; and the movement had proceeded so far before 1813, when the company's charter was to expire, that a considerable relaxation of the monopoly was then obtained. From that time, British merchants were permitted to trade to the territories of the company, and India generally, though none but the company might traffic with China. During the next twenty years, the doctrine of free-trade had been elaborated and partially practised; the demand for tea had largely increased in England; those who had visited the United States could tell what a variety of Chinese productions they had seen in the houses of the Salem merchants, and in the shops of New York, and how much they had heard of the desire of thickly peopled China for a supply of European and American productions; and the demand for a complete opening of the Eastern seas had become too strong to be resisted. By the charter of 1813, the company had been bound to keep their territorial and commercial accounts separate; and, on their first examination, it was clear that they could not for a moment compete with private merchants in supplying India with manufactured goods, to the advantage of both parties.¹ In fifteen years, the company's exports of manufactured cottons to India had dwindled to almost nothing, while those of private merchants exceeded in value a million and a half per annum, and were still on the increase. After all that the English public had been told of the immutability of Hindoo habits, and the impossibility of any great expansion of trade, it became clear that the Hindoos, like other people, would stretch out their hands to obtain good and comfortable things, if only such things were placed within their reach. Bishop Heber's journals were by this time pub-

¹ M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, p. 502.

lished; and they told of the strong disposition of both Hindoos and Mohammedans in India to imitate the English, and obtain whatever was necessary to enable them to assume an English mode of living: he tells of jackets and trousers, shoes and stockings, round hats, English furniture, French devices and mottoes on jewellery, English hardware, crockery, writing-desks, arms, and clothing,—not only in and near Calcutta, but in remote provincial towns. This much having been proved, the commercial world did not attend to what the company now said of the immutability of Chinese habits, and the impossibility of any great expansion of trade there. It was time to try. The company took warning by their experience of the results of competition with private enterprise in India, and did not insist upon renewing the experiment in China. Their age as traders was past; and they now retired upon their territorial dignity, leaving a large section of the world open to British commerce. It was a striking event to a multitude of people at home, and to many abroad. Almost everybody reckoned on having cheap tea, and plenty of it; and some anticipated that a few houses in London and our principal ports might soon have curiosities to show like those of Salem and New York,—elegant matting, a variety of serviceable silks, extraordinary toys, and Chinese copies of English prints,—a miracle of painstaking. Many, it may be hoped, thought of the blessing to the Chinese of new means and opportunities of civilization; and some, of the effect upon the relations of the whole world of the throwing-open the intercourse between the East and the West, which, whether cursed with a war at the outset or not, was certainly necessary to an ultimate condition of fraternization and peace. In this view, one point was of eminent interest to some of the best people living in the world. In these newly opened countries of the East, there are wide regions—broad belts of soil and climate—fitted for the production of sugar and cotton. It is the limitation of the area for the production of sugar and cotton which protracts the existence of negro slavery. It is well to use all possible means of appeal to the justice and humanity of men, to induce an abolition of negro slavery; but here was another opening for hope and enterprise. If slavery were not abolished sooner, it certainly must be by a cheaper production of sugar and cotton in the East by free labor than can be accomplished in the West by slave labor. No such possibility existed while the India Company held the East in their hand: but now the prospect seemed to be opening; and in this view, again, the date of the expiration of the company's charter might be one of high importance in the history of the world.

By the Act of 1833, the charter was renewed for twenty

years, during which time the territorial government remains in the hands of the company.¹ From the 22d of April, 1834 the China and tea trade of the company was to cease, and all its commercial concerns were to be wound up, and its commercial property sold. All the restrictions which prevented the free admission of Europeans, and their free residence in India, were repealed; and equality of claim to office and employment between natives and foreigners was decreed. There was to be no distinction on account of race, color, or religion. From that day, new hopes have been dawning upon the East; and it is now universally understood, that the great work to be done in India is to raise the native population by educational methods, and by a just administration of our power, and not, as it once was, to keep them down by force, — whether for their own sake or ours. As for the commercial results of the new charter, the number of ships which passed to and fro increased year by year, even before the introduction of steam-navigation into those seas. In ten years the trade with China had doubled, and the value of British and Irish exports to India and Ceylon had increased from two millions and a half to six millions and nearly a half.

During the same period, as is observed in the commercial registers of the time, the value of the exports to the West Indies had declined. These colonies were in a disturbed and unsatisfactory state. For some years, the experiment of a gradual preparation of the slave for freedom had been going on; and with the inevitable result of failure. The slaves were informed, by the arrival of successive orders in Council, by the appointment of protectors of slaves, and by the trial of a few slave causes, that they had rights; and when a man of any color once knows to a certainty that he has rights which are withheld from him by parties close at hand, he is never contented again in his wronged condition. The planters were as restless in their way as the slaves. They resented the orders in Council, and every thing in the shape of admonition from home, as an unwarrantable interference with their management of their property; and they refused the slave registration and other observances prescribed by government. The language in their assemblies was audaciously disrespectful and petulant; and, in Trinidad, there was a proposition that the inhabitants should refuse to pay taxes till the last order in Council was rescinded. In December, 1831, a formidable insurrection broke out in Jamaica, which occasioned suspensions of business and other loss, and was put down only by martial law; and, in the following April, the West-India merchants in London endeavored to make government liable for the losses thus incurred, and for all which,

¹ Polit. Dict. i. p. 797.

in the opinion of the planters, could be traced to the operation of the orders, or of other movements in behalf of the slave. When, at this meeting, the responsibility for all disorders was thrown upon the British government, and protests and claims were sent in to the Colonial Secretary, "in consequence of the measures pursued by His Majesty's ministers," it was clear that a final settlement of the great question was at hand.¹ It was now too late to desert the cause of the slaves, and hand them over to the arbitrary management of their owners. There must be a final issue; and the planters were bringing it on as fast as they could. If they had not done so, events would. In the three years from 1828, the production of sugar had so far lessened as that the imports in England had sunk from 198,400 tons to 185,660 tons. The planters believed that they could recover their ground if England would give them aid, and only leave them to manage their slaves in their own way; while England felt, not only that the negroes were fellow-subjects as well as the whites, but that no power on earth could roll back the years, so as to re-instate the planters in their former position. By their present conduct, the West-India merchants and proprietors hurried on the crisis at a rate not dreamed of by the friends of the negro at home.²

On the 17th of April, the Earl of Harewood presented to the House of Lords a petition from persons interested in the colonies, for a full parliamentary inquiry into the laws, usages, and condition of the West-India colonies, their past improvements, and possible future ameliorations,—due regard being had to "the best interests of the slaves themselves, and the rights of private property." The committee was granted; and the last order in Council was suspended for the time. On the 24th of May, the Lord Chancellor presented a petition from 135,000 persons, resident in and near London, praying for the speedy abolition of slavery, and that no delay might be caused by the appointment of the West-India committee.³ Lord Suffield followed with twenty-one petitions to the same purpose. While these were discussed in the one House, Mr. T. Fowell Buxton was moving in the other for a select committee to prepare for the extinction of slavery in the British dominions at the earliest possible moment.⁴ It is painful now to read the debate on this occasion, not only on account of the perpetual pleas which make the reader blush for the conscience of the legislature,—pleas of the good food, light work, and relief from responsibility, of the slaves, and of their enjoyment of the blessings of Christianity,—but on account of the timidity and supineness of many who called them-

¹ Annual Register, 1832, p. 273.

² Hansard, xii. p. 596.

³ Hansard, xiii. p. 6.

⁴ Hansard, xiii. p. 38.

selves the friends of the negroes. Mr. Buxton had a hard battle to fight; but he stood his ground. He must have been aware that he understood the matter, while his opponents, of all parties, did not. He knew that the abolition of slavery was inevitable, and that the most speedy abolition would be the safest for all parties. He knew that a gradual preparation of a slave for freedom was an impossible thing; he knew that to leave the matter in the hands of the government was to give up the cause; he knew that to revert to the resolutions of the 15th of May, 1823, was to acquiesce in another nine years' delay; he knew that to mix up in the same motion the questions of emancipation and of compensation to the planters would be to expose the great moral to all the risks of the minor financial question; and he therefore stood firm, amidst the entreaties of friends, the mockery of foes, and the somewhat contemptuous displeasure of the ministers, who on this occasion could not be ranked either with friends or foes. Lord Althorp, unaware what a work he and his colleagues were destined to do in a few short months,¹ "would not pledge himself to any immediate abolition of slavery, because he did not think that the slave population was in a situation to receive that boon beneficially for themselves; but he thought that the legislature might employ itself most usefully in bringing the slaves to such a state of moral feeling as would be suitable to the proposed alteration in their condition;" and he moved an amendment on Mr. Buxton's motion, in favor of "conformity with the resolutions of this House of the 15th of May, 1823." Thus far were our statesmen behind the time, that one of the most honest, one of the most sensitive to the claims of justice, was unaware that the only possible education for the use of rights is in the exercise of the rights themselves, and was unashamed to revert to the barren resolutions of nine years before. In that spirit of rectitude which includes the truest mercy, Mr. Buxton refused to surrender his motion, even if he should vote alone. Ninety, however, voted on his side, and 163 on the other. This majority of 73 on Lord Althorp's side was not so large as was expected; and it was probably outnumbered, a hundred times over, by the converts to Mr. Buxton's view outside the House, who could bring an effectual force to bear on the government.

This question is one which implicates not two quarters of the world only, but three, — not Europe and Africa only, but America. It is necessary to survey the whole area of the operation of negro slavery, in order to give the true history of any one part. There was at this date an infant movement in the United States, which was destined to signalize our century as the Reformation distinguished its own age. Some

Abolition
movements.

¹ Hansard, xiii. p. 60.

who live nearest to the cradle of this reformation are only now — five and twenty years after its birth — beginning to perceive with any clearness the magnitude of the event ; but so it is with all the great transitions in the world. While the Reformation was going on, multitudes of ordinary people in Germany were living on as usual, in unconsciousness that any thing remarkable was befalling the world ; “ Likewise also, as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded ; ” and, if any stranger had inquired of them about the new prophet and his doctrine, they would have denied that such existed, till the fire-shower of Luther’s denunciations came to burn up the superstitions of the age. Thus it was now in the United States, where the gibbet and the tar-kettle and the cow-hide were preparing for the patriots of the community ; and the time was drawing on, when the rights of petition to Congress, of the press, and of free speech, were to be suspended, in order to be restored with increased security, for the object of freeing the soil from negro slavery. Before this could happen, some noble hearts must be broken, some precious lives sacrificed, some public halls burned, and many private dwellings laid waste ; but the end was decreed, and the beginning was now made. In 1830, two young men had been wont to walk across the Common at Boston, and discuss the right way of setting about the abolition of slavery in America ; and they and another — poor and obscure, all three of them — had met in a garret, and there, with their feet upon a wood-pile, and by the light of a single candle, they had solemnly resolved steadfastly to measure their moral force against the hideous evil. It has fallen to them and their followers to contend for a wider emancipation than that of the negroes, — to be the champions, in the New World, of freedom of opinion, speech, and the press ; and before their work — now secure, but not fully accomplished — is finally dismissed from their hands, it may appear that yet other kinds of freedom have been brought in and established by them. The conflict between the powers of light and darkness, of liberty and tyranny in the United States, is now, in the middle of the century, approaching its issue. At the time when Mr. Buxton stood up in the British House of Commons, refusing to yield his point, an indomitable brother-reformer over the seas had presented his manifesto in one of the finest declarations ever given to the world. No one knew better than Mr. Buxton, and no one would have been more eager to explain the fact, that the brother-spirit over the seas had infinitely the harder lot and the most arduous work of the two for his portion. It was only by living on bread and water that the confessor of this mighty cause could obtain means to publish his paper. “ When it sold particularly well,” says his partner in the sacrifice, “ we

treated ourselves with a bowl of milk." In the small, shabby first sheet of "The Liberator," printed with old types, we find the manifesto which will not be forgotten while the Anglo-Saxon liberties and language last. "I am aware," says Garrison, "that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I *will* be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest, — I will not equivocate, — **AND I WILL BE HEARD.** The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal, and to hasten the resurrection of the dead. It is pretended that I am retarding the cause of emancipation by the coarseness of my invective and the precipitancy of my measures. The charge is not true. On this question my influence, humble as it is, is felt at this moment to a considerable extent, and shall be felt in coming years, — not perniciously, but beneficially, — not as a curse, but as a blessing; and posterity will bear witness that I was right. I desire to thank God that he enables me to disregard the fear of man, and to speak his truth in its simplicity and power." There were persons in the House of Commons who exclaimed against coarseness and precipitancy, and called out for soft words and a mincing gait towards the object, — the gaze reverting to the resolutions of nine years before. But the men who understood the case knew that events — and not any impulse of impatient minds — now called for a thundering utterance, and a tread that should shake the ground. The demand for liberty was now one which could not be neglected. The property question might be considered too; but it must not be permitted to cause the delay of the greater argument. Though defeated on the division, Mr. Buxton had made this clear; and from that day there was no more halting on either shore of the Atlantic.

A vote of relief in money to the West-India colonies, on account of a destructive hurricane in Barbadoes, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia, was now made to include Jamaica, on account of the recent insurrection, and raised from 100,000*l.* to 1,000,000*l.* The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that it would require 800,000*l.* to rebuild the premises destroyed by the insurgent slaves. It was in this same year that the slaves in America heard of Garrison's manifesto; and from that time they ceased to rise. Till then, revolts had been frequent, — several taking place every year. Since Garrison, the "peace-man," has arisen in their behalf, there has not been one.

By the 14th of the next May, the government had declared that they had found the pressure of public opinion on the subject of slavery too strong to be resisted; and they had brought forward, by the mouth of Mr. Stanley, — who had become Colonial Secretary, — a series of resolutions, which were to be debated

on the 30th of the same month.¹ In the speech of the Secretary, introducing the resolutions, nothing is more remarkable than the narrative given of West-India distress; a distress so frequently recurring, so incessantly complained of, in all conditions of war and peace and of changing seasons, as to show that the secret of prosperity does not lie in slavery, and that there was some fatal fault in the system which the planters were so unwilling to have touched. There was nothing in this narrative to surprise the economists, in or out of the House; and the economists and the friends of the negro and the most enlightened of the advocates of the planters were alike sorry to see in the resolutions a clinging to the unsound method of "gradualism," in the abolition of slavery. It was proposed, that all children born after the passing of any act of emancipation, and all that should be under six years old at the time of its passage, should be declared free; that all others, then slaves, should be registered as apprenticed laborers, being considered free, except for the restriction of being compelled to labor for their present owners, under conditions, and for a space of time to be determined by Parliament; that a loan not exceeding 15,000,000*l.* should be offered to the planters; and that Parliament should provide for the expense of a local magistracy, and of means of education and religious training of the negroes.

Mr. Buxton declared at once against the compulsory apprenticeship, as a device pregnant with mischief. He was joined by one who had been a member of the government, Lord Howick, who had resigned office from his inability to countenance this provision, and his reluctance to introduce confusion into the government by his opposition, otherwise than as an independent member of the House.² This apprenticeship arrangement was one great difficulty, and the loan was another. The planters and their advocates considered the amount a mere pittance, and yet were sure they could never repay it. With a good grace, the loan of fifteen millions was converted into a gift of twenty millions; and the term of apprenticeship was reduced. Mr. Buxton was so well supported in his opposition, that government had no choice but to yield. The field slaves were to have been apprenticed for twelve years, and the house slaves for seven: their terms were now reduced to seven and five. As to the money part of the affair, there were many who saw and declared, that, in strict principle, there could be no claim for compensation for deprivation of that which, from its very nature, never could have been property; and such opposed any payment at all to the planters, as they would have refused to purchase a slave who could be freed without. But the greater number, seeing how long the

¹ Hansard, xvii. p. 1230.

² Hansard, xvii. p. 1231.

law had recognized human beings as property, and on how bare a legal basis all right to property rests, were willing to avoid subtle controversy, and to close the dispute rather with generous concession than with rigidity; and the gift of twenty millions was voted with an alacrity which must ever be considered a remarkable and honorable sign of the times. The generous acquiescence of the people under this prodigious increase of their burdens has caused the moralists of other nations to declare that the British Act of Emancipation stands alone for moral grandeur in the history of the world; while those of other nations who do not happen to be moralists see in it only an inexplicable hypocrisy, or obscure process of self-interest.

On the 30th of August, 1833, the Emancipation Act passed the Lords. The name and much of the substance of Negro emancipation. slavery was to expire on the 1st of August, 1834. The young children were then to be free; and the government fondly hoped, against the warnings of those who understood the second nature which overgrows the first in the holders of irresponsible power, that the parents would, from the same hour, be morally and civilly free, — bound only in the salutary obligations to virtuous labor. However that might be, the day was within view when all should be wholly free. To her great honor, — and not the less because the act proved to be one of true policy, — Antigua surrendered the right of apprenticeship, and set her slaves wholly free on the appointed day. Elsewhere, the arrangement worked so ill, — the oppression of the negroes was so gross, and to them in their transition state so intolerable, — the perplexities were so many, and so difficult to deal with, — that government was soon convinced that “gradualism” was as impracticable under the name of freedom as of slavery: in three years, the term of apprenticeship was shortened; and presently afterwards the arrangement was relinquished altogether.

The season of emancipation was dreaded by some of the slaveholders, who had spent all their lives in fear of negro risings. To others it appeared that the danger of revolt was when the negroes were suffering under tyranny, and not when they were relieved from it. On both shores of the Atlantic, however, expectation stood on tiptoe to watch the moment which should give freedom to 800,000 of the enslaved race. The Carolina planter looked well to his negro quarter, to see that his “hands” were not abroad after dark. Garrison and his band sat waiting for tidings, — with more faith in the negro temper than anybody else, but still with some anxiety for the cause. The British Parliament looked benevolently forth, in the consciousness of having done an act which should stand alone in the history of the

world. The British peasant thought affectionately of the black brethren whom he, as a freeman and a tax-payer, had helped to release from bondage. And when the tidings came, — ^{First of} the narrative of how the great day had passed over, ^{August, 1834.} — there was such joy as is seldom excited by one event among opposite interests. Garrison and his band were as much relieved as the Carolina planter; and the English peasant was as proud and pleased as the British Parliament. The 1st of August fell on a Friday; and there was to be holiday from the Thursday night till Monday. The missionaries did their duty well; and they completely succeeded in impressing the people with a sense of the solemnity of the occasion. The arrival of that midnight in the island of Antigua, where the negroes were to be wholly free at once, was an event which cannot be read of without a throbbing of the heart. It was to the negroes their passover night. They were all collected in their chapels, — the Wesleyans keeping watch-night in the chapels throughout the island. The pastors recommended to the people to receive the blessing in silence and on their knees.¹ At the first stroke of midnight from the great cathedral-bell, all fell on their knees, and nothing was heard but the slow-tolling bell, and some struggling sobs in the intervals. The silence lasted for a few moments after the final stroke, when a peal of awful thunder rattled through the sky, and the flash of lightning seemed to put out the lamps in the chapels. Then the kneeling crowd sprang to their feet, and gave voice to their passionate emotions, — such voice as might be expected from this excitable people. Some tossed up their free arms, and groaned away at once the heart's burden of a life. Families and neighbors opened their arms to each other. Some prayed aloud, after the lead of their pastors, that they might be free indeed; and a voice was heard in thanksgiving for a real sabbath now, when the wicked should cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest, and the voice of the oppressor should be no more heard, and the servant should be free from his master. In some of the chapels, the noble spectacle was seen of the masters attending with their negroes, and, when the clock had struck, shaking hands with them, and wishing them joy. The rest of the holiday was spent partly in mirth, as was right, and much of it in listening to the addresses of the missionaries, who urged upon them with much force, and in the utmost detail, the duties of sobriety and diligence, and harmony with their employers. On the Monday morning, they went to work, — that work which they were proud of now, as it was for wages.

Fair as was this promise, and well as the conduct of the negroes has justified the highest expectations of their most san-

¹ Thome and Kimball's "Emancipation in the West Indies."

guine friends, no reasonable persons were so sanguine as to suppose that all parties would be satisfied,—that an act of Parliament could neutralize all the evil results of an iniquity that was centuries old,—that the striking of that cathedral-clock was to silence all discontents for the future as well as the past. From the nature of things it could not be so. The planter could not, at the striking of that clock, put off his habits of command, and his life-long associations of inferiority with the negro race. He could not, in a moment or a year, become an economist, a practical man, carrying on his business with the close attention and care and thrifty skill held necessary in the employers of free labor elsewhere. And the negroes would certainly work in a very different way, and to a very different amount, henceforth. The husband and father might, and no doubt would, accomplish much more actual work between year's end and year's end: but some of it would be for himself, on ground of his own; and the women would be almost universally withdrawn from field-labor, and they would keep their children under their own care at home. As the possession of land was, in the eyes of negroes, the symbol of all earthly power and privilege, it was certain that their great ambition would be to buy land; and thus, again, more labor would be withdrawn from the existing estates. And these estates were in that bad state of tillage which always co-exists with slave-labor; and the conditions were thus unfavorable to a change of system. The probability seemed to many to be, that there would be a decline in the production of sugar, and distress among the planters, not remediable by any kind or degree of aid from England, ending probably in a transfer of the estates from the representatives of the old system to those of the new. A tone of fretful triumph would have to be borne with for a time from the enemies of emancipation; and, perhaps, a temporary deficiency of sugar,—entailing further sacrifice on the English working-classes, who had so cheerfully undertaken their share of the twenty millions of compensation; and, in some future time, every white might have sold his plantation to a black or mulatto capitalist. There would be much evil in all this, if it should happen; but, after so long and grievous a sin, some retributive penalty must be expected, and there were bright points both in the near and distant prospects. The negress was now under the protection of a husband, and had a home in which to labor and rest. Christianity could now be preached, without dread and without omission. While regretting any decline in the outward fortunes of the planters, no considerate person could for a moment put those outward fortunes into the scale against the moral and material interests of the vast majority of residents in the West Indies; and, as for the supply of sugar, there is a broad

belt surrounding the world — here studded with South-American ranchos, there feathered with African palms, and beyond, watered by the rivers of India, and strewn with the islands of the eastern archipelago — where sugar enough may be grown for the needs of the whole race. The centuries bring with them their own resources. Ours brought a rich one in the insight and impulse to extinguish a mighty sin. Necessity and justice were seen and heard to demand it; the thing was done; and necessity and justice may always be trusted to vindicate themselves.

CHAPTER IX.

THUS far the Whig Ministry had wrought and prospered well. They had undertaken their great works with a clear view of what ought to be done, and a determination to do it; or, if they at any time fell short in either of these requisites, the sympathy or opposition of the liberal party soon brought them up again. Among many deficiencies and weaknesses which they were now to exhibit, the most fatal, and one of the most inexcusable, was in regard to Ireland. It required no miraculous wisdom to see that Catholic emancipation would not tranquillize Ireland while she suffered under the burden of what the "Times" called "too much Church." In the most orderly state

Irish Church.

of society in any country, it could not be expected that between six and seven millions of inhabitants of one religious faith would pay a portion of their produce to support a Church which included only a few hundred thousands, — a Church which they conscientiously disapproved, and whose funds they saw to be ample, while their own priesthood had nothing to depend on but the precarious contributions of their flocks. On the one hand was a Church numbering 853,000, with four archbishops, eighteen bishops, and a law which authorized its clergy to derive an essential part of their incomes from tithes; and this in a country where tillage was the almost universal means of subsistence, and the division of the land was so minute that the tithe-collectors seemed never to have done making their demands of shillings and half-pence. On the other hand, there was a Church including six millions and a half of members, without aid from government, without countenance from the law; with a multitudinous priesthood who lived with the poor, and like the poor; and from these poor was the tithe extorted by perpetually recurring applications, — applications backed by soldiery and armed police, who carried off the pig, or the sack of potatoes, or the money-fee which the peasant desired to offer to his own priest. It required no miraculous wisdom to see that the long-exasperated Irish must consider this management as religious persecution, and feel that Catholic emancipation was not yet complete. A very ordinary foresight would have shown that it

would soon be found impossible to collect tithe in Ireland; and, further, that it must soon be acknowledged by the whole world at home, as it had long been declared by the whole world abroad, that the maintenance of the establishment in Ireland was an insult and injury which no nation could be expected to endure, and which must preclude all chance of peace till it should be abolished in its form of a dominant Church. The Whig ministers were not only without the miraculous wisdom, but they were without the ordinary foresight. They, Whigs as they were, were blinded by that same superstitious dread of changing the law, which had, time after time, been the destruction of their opponents. They, Whigs as they were, seemed to have forgotten that no human law can be made for eternity,—that no age or generation can bind down a future age or generation to its own arrangements, or legislate in a spirit of prophecy. They whose ancestors had declared these truths in 1688, and as often since as any great reform had been needed; they who had dissolved the laws which gave seats in Parliament as a property to individuals, and the negro as a property to his white fellow-man,—pleaded now, while Ireland was convulsed from end to end with the Church question, that the Church in Ireland could never be touched, because its establishment and revenues were guaranteed by law. If it was asked to whom were this establishment and these revenues guaranteed, it was necessary to dismiss the abstraction called the Church, and to reply, either the worshippers or their clergy; and the question then was, whether means of worship could not be provided for the one, and an honorable subsistence for the other, by some method less objectionable than taking by force the tenth potato and the tenth peat from the Catholic peasant, and parading the Church of the small minority before the eyes of the vast majority as the pensioned favorite of the State. If the Whig ministers had had sagacity to see the untenable nature of the Irish establishment, and courage to propose its reduction to the proper condition of a Protestant denomination, they would have gained honors even nobler than those which they won by parliamentary reform. It is highly probable that Ireland would have been by this time comparatively at ease; for the ministers might apparently have carried such a measure at the outset of their legislation for Ireland, when their power was at its height, and the question of Church reform in England was discussed with a freedom and boldness which soon disappeared. If not, however,—if they had failed and gone out upon this question,—they would have entitled themselves to the eternal gratitude of the nation, and of so much of the world at large as is interested in the interior peace and prosperity of the British empire. But they did not see nor understand their

opportunity. The phantom of the impersonal Church, and its shadowy train of legal guarantees, was before them, so as to shut out the realities of the case, — the substantial interests of the Protestant religion, and the weighty facts that many of the churches were empty, the numbers of Protestants stationary or decreasing, and the working clergy actually living upon alms. The Administration tried this and that and the other small method of dealing with the difficulty; at what expense of delay, contention, and ultimate partial yielding, we shall hereafter see.¹ “Of this,” said their friends at the time, by the most calm and moderate of their organs, “there can be no doubt, — the only way to afford her [the Irish Church] the least chance of a permanent existence is to abolish tithes entirely, and to cut down her other emoluments very low indeed; that is to say, to reduce them until they amount to no more than a fair equivalent for the services which she can render in return for them.”

In 1831, the state of Ireland seemed to be growing daily worse in regard to violence. There was a conflict of Prosecution of O'Connell. forces between the Lord Lieutenant and Mr. O'Connell. The Lord Lieutenant issued proclamations against a certain order of public meetings. O'Connell and his friends disobeyed the proclamation, and were brought to trial. Delays and difficulties were introduced into the legal process, as is usual in Ireland; but the matter ended in O'Connell and his comrades pleading guilty to the first fourteen counts in the indictment, which charged them with holding meetings in violation of various proclamations. The Attorney-General was satisfied, and withdrew the remaining counts. Mr. O'Connell denied in the newspapers that he had pleaded guilty, and declared that he had allowed judgment to go by default, in order to plead before the House of Lords, through the twelve judges; before which time, he hoped, the Act under which he was prosecuted would expire. As it was asserted and proved in the House of Commons that he had actually pleaded guilty, and that nothing remained but for sentence to be pronounced against him, his followers, in their amazement at such a fall, resorted to the supposition that some kind of compromise had taken place between himself and the government, and that the liberator had humbled himself in order to obtain some boon for Ireland. The supposition grew to a rumor, and the rumor spread to the friends and opponents of the ministers in Parliament; and, though it was promptly met, it was never again extinguished. Whether it was through indolence, carelessness, timidity, or temporary convenience, certain it was that the Whig government brought on itself, for a course of years, the charge of compromise with O'Connell, after re-

¹ Spectator, 1833, p. 59.

peated proofs of his utter unworthiness of all trust, and therefore of all countenance as the representative of his country. On the present occasion, Mr. Stanley, Secretary for Ireland, was questioned in the House about the transactions of government with Mr. O'Connell; and his reply was express and clear.¹ He would not say that Mr. O'Connell's friends had not endeavored to make terms for him; but the reply of government had been, that Mr. O'Connell's conduct had not entitled him to any consideration, and "the law must take its course,"—"judgment should be pressed against him;" the Crown had "procured a verdict against Mr. O'Connell, and it would, undoubtedly, call him up to receive judgment upon it." Within a fortnight after, a ridiculous scene took place in the House. Mr. O'Connell asked the Secretary for Ireland on what ground he had asserted that friends of his had endeavored to make terms for him. "There could be no delicacy in disclosing their names, because, if they were accredited agents, he—on the supposition the principal—asked for publicity; and, if they were not his agents, it was but common justice to hold them up as impostors." Again, Mr. Stanley's answer was express and clear.² A letter had been laid before him which proposed terms, to induce the Irish government to forego the prosecution,—the letter being dictated by Mr. O'Connell himself to his son-in-law, and enclosed in one from his son. The House received this explanation with shouts of laughter; and the shouts were renewed when Mr. O'Connell said that "he could not but admit that his question had been answered most satisfactorily by the right honorable gentleman." The terms proposed were, as Mr. O'Connell now declared, that he should forego his agitation for the repeal of the union, which he regarded only as means to an end, if the government would, in the first place, drop the prosecution, and next propose good measures for Ireland.³ "The answer was, that no such compromise would be for a moment entertained by the Irish government, and that the law must take its course." It is difficult to account for a self-exposure so audacious as this of O'Connell, on any other supposition than that he wished to advertise his readiness to be negotiated with, and to surrender his repeal agitation on sufficient inducement. He had long before so surrendered all pretensions to honor, and shown himself so incapable of conceiving of honor, that he could go through a scene like this of the 28th of February, 1831, with less embarrassment than any other man. The misfortune of the case to the government was, that it did not redeem the pledge given by Mr. Stanley. The law did not take its course; Mr. O'Connell was not brought up for judg-

¹ Hansard, ii. pp. 491–612.² Hansard, ii. pp. 1006–1007.³ Hansard, ii. p. 1007.

ment. Time passed on ; the Act under which he was convicted expired ; and, when it was defunct, the ministers considered that it would be ungracious to inflict the penalties it decreed.

From week to week of this session, the outrages in Ireland grew worse. Tithe-collectors were murdered in some places ; in others, they were dragged from their beds, and laid in a ditch to have their ears cut off. Five of the police were shot dead at once by a party in ambush. The peasantry declared against pastures, and broke up grass-lands in broad day. Cattle were driven off, lest the owners should pay tithe upon them. A committee of Roman-Catholic priests, assembled at Ennis for the promotion of order and peace, broke up with expressions of despair.¹ O'Connell attended some of the trials in May, before a special commission issued for the purpose ; and he took the opportunity of making matters worse by addressing the people in speeches, in which he told them that many of the convicted peasants would have been acquitted if fairly tried, but that the juries were afraid to acquit. He charged his hearers with — not crime, but — indiscretion, and advised them to deliver up their arms, not because the law required it, but because they might thus mollify the government, and purchase leniency for their comrades who had been caught. Towards the end of the month, there was a fight between the police and the peasants at Castle Pollard, in Westmeath, on occasion of an attempted rescue. The chief constable was knocked down ; the police fired, and nine or ten persons were killed. The police were tried for manslaughter, on the prosecution of the government ; and O'Connell found matter of complaint even in this, after the men were acquitted, alleging that the prosecutions would have been fairer, if left to be instituted by the families of the slaughtered men. If they had been so left, his complaints of the apathy of the government would have been more formidable still. In June, an affair happened at Newtownbarry, in Wexford, which shows what was the position of the Church in the Catholic districts of Ireland at that time. On the 18th of June, which was market-day, some cattle were to be sold, which had been impounded for tithe-payment. The following placard was on the walls of the town : "Inhabitants, &c., &c.— There will be an end of Church plunder ; your pot, blanket, and pig will not hereafter be sold by auction, to support, in luxury, idleness, and ease, persons who endeavor to make it appear that it is essential to the peace and prosperity of the country, and your eternal salvation, while the most of you are starving. Attend to an auction of your neighbor's cattle, seized for tithe by the Rev. Alexander M'Clintock." The yeomanry were on the alert to assist the police. As soon as the sale began,

¹ Annual Register, 1831, pp. 324–5.

it merged into a fight; and twelve of the Catholic mob were killed. The consequent law-proceedings were baffled and rendered fruitless by trick and timidity; but the affair was never forgotten. Before the year was out, the clergy had become afraid to ask, and their flocks to pay, their dues. As the year closed, soldiery assisted the police; but this only enlarged the area of the fights, and deepened their animosity. On one occasion, five of the Catholics were shot dead by the military; and a fortnight after, when a strong body of police were escorting a tithe-collector, they were summoned to surrender him to popular vengeance; and, on their refusal, twelve of them were slaughtered in a lane, and more left fearfully wounded. The captain of police and his son, ten years old, were among the slain; and the pony which the boy rode was stabbed dead. The arms of the assailants were scythes, pitchforks, and bludgeons. A country lad, who appeared about thirteen years old, went from one to another of the prostrate police, and, finding that five of them still breathed, made an end of them with his scythe.¹ Such were the things that were done in the name and for the alleged rights of the religion which brought "peace on earth, and good-will to men." As for the reviled clergy, — the men who were declared to be living "in luxury, idleness, and ease," and whose claim to tithe the Irish Secretary was advocating in the House as "a matter of justice between man and man," — they were living, some in fear of a prison for debt, as they had received no money for many months; many more in fear of their neighbors; and not a few in fear of seeing their children starve before their eyes. Sometimes there would come in by night a pig, or a bag of meal, or a sack of potatoes, from some pitying friend; and by day the clergyman might be seen digging "for bare life" in his garden, with his shoeless children about him, while his wife was trying, within the house, whether the tattered clothes would bear another and another patch. Such was the system of "justice between man and man" which Mr. Stanley would not at this time touch, because it was legal. If this was justice, on every or any hand, what then was injustice?

Some clergymen, however, differed from Mr. Stanley about perseverance in not touching the tithe system, on account of its justice. The Archbishop of Dublin declared that he spoke the opinion of many of his clerical brethren, as well as his own, when he said, in his evidence before the Lords' committee in this year:² "As for the continuance of the tithe system, it seems to me that it must be at the point of the bayonet, — that it must be through a sort of chronic civil war. The ill feelings that have so long existed against it have been embodied in so organized a combina-

¹ Annual Register, 1831, p. 327.

² Hansard, x. p. 1277.

tion, that I conceive there would be continually breakings-out of resistance, which must be kept down by a continuance of very severe measures, such as the government might indeed resolve to have recourse to for once, if necessary, but would be very unwilling to resort to habitually, so as to keep the country under military government. And the most intelligent persons, and the most experienced I have conversed with, seem to think that nothing else will permanently secure the payment of tithes under the present system." If this was true, tithes were condemned in spite of their justice; for it could not be supposed that the preachers of a non-aggressive and non-resistant religion would desire to have their maintenance permanently collected at the point of the bayonet. There must, in that case, be more "anxious thought" about meat and clothing than consisted with their profession. Already, indeed, the two faiths in Ireland seemed to have exchanged characters. It was the Protestant Church which displayed its protected and endowed and dominant hierarchy; and it was the Catholic faith which sent its priests from house to house to preach glad tidings to the poor, accepting subsistence from the overflow of good-will, but demanding nothing in the name of human law.

In the royal speech, at the opening of the next session, some progress in ministerial opinion was apparent. The Royal notice of tithes. King requested the Parliament to consider whether some improvement could not be made in the law regarding tithes in Ireland. In after-years, there was abundant cause for lamentation that the advance was so small. Committees of inquiry were appointed by both Houses; and the evidence adduced was so astounding as to induce, in a multitude of minds, views of the Protestant Church in Ireland which it is lamentable that the government did not take heed to, and act upon. Many friends of Ireland, as well as the Catholics themselves, desired, if tithes were not to be abolished, that they should be so appropriated as to yield benefit to the body who paid them, by means of a recurrence to the first principles of tithes. Originally, one-fourth of the tithe was devoted to the maintenance of the poor, and another to that of the places of worship; and it was now proposed, even in petitions to Parliament, that this application should be made of the proceeds of tithe and of the lands of the Church in Ireland. Lord Grey took the earliest opportunity of intimating, that he should strenuously oppose any proposition which went to deprive the Church — that ever-impersonal pleader! — "of her just rights."¹ Perhaps the best expression of the widely awakened feeling we have adverted to may be found in the speech of Lord Ebrington, who had himself been on the committee in the Com-

¹ Hansard, x. p. 3.

mons, "respecting the unfortunate anomaly which the Church of Ireland presented.¹ He should not think any plan could lead to a final settlement of the question, which attempted to exclude the consideration of a thorough reform of the Church of Ireland. When he saw the clergy of that Church receiving salaries so disproportionate to the number of Protestants under their care, and when he saw that those salaries were paid chiefly by Roman Catholics, he looked upon the system as pregnant with injury to the cause of religion. He protested, therefore, against the number of the clergy being so disproportioned to their congregations; and he should be glad to see some more just distribution of the revenues of the Church, such as would afford a more adequate provision for the working clergy; and he should also be glad to see a state of things in which no part of the revenues of the Church should be diverted from the use of the Church. He could think no settlement of the existing complaints satisfactory, which, with a due regard to all existing interests, — for God forbid that they should attempt to strip any man of that which of right belonged to him, — did not contemplate the reduction of the Church of Ireland to a condition better proportioned to the wants of the Protestant inhabitants." Such was the view brought out of committee by as thorough-going a friend of the Whig Administration as sat in the House.

There was now no time to be lost. The Irish recusants knew, to a man, that the royal speech had recommended to Parliament a consideration of the tithe system; and they took this for a royal condemnation of tithe-paying. They knew, before February was out, that the parliamentary committees had reported that nothing would avail short of "a complete extinction of tithes," by commutation for a charge upon the land; and these things were considered warrant enough for a refusal to pay tithe at all, and for persecution of those who did pay. An archdeacon in the neighborhood of Cashel hoped to establish a commutation with his parishioners; but now they refused his terms, came up to him in a field in sight of his own house, — a field where several persons were ploughing, who took no notice of the transaction, — and stoned him till his head was beaten to pieces.² If any resident, pressed by his pastor, or by conscience, or by fear of the law, paid the smallest amount of tithe in the most secret manner, his cattle were houghed in the night, or his house was burnt over his head, or his flock of sheep was hunted over a precipice, and lay a crushed heap in the morning. There was a sound of a horn, at that time, which made men's flesh creep, whether it was heard by night or day; for those who took upon them to extinguish tithes now boldly assembled their numbers by the sound

¹ Hansard, x. p. 1354.

² Annual Register, 1832, p. 282.

of the horn ; and all who heard it knew that murder or mutilation or arson was going to be perpetrated. Captures, special commissions, and trials were useless. Witnesses dared not give evidence ; jurors dared not attend. Magistrates and police were multiplied ; but the thing needed was a removal of the grievance, which was real enough, however atrociously avenged.¹ On the very chapels, notices were now posted by the insurgents, and no man dared to take them down. There was, indeed, no time to lose.

The clergy naturally ceased to demand their dues ; but even those of them who had any thing to live upon, found that they were not to be left in peace. It seemed to be intended to drive them from the country. If they had cows, nobody could be found to milk them. Tradesmen who supplied articles to clergymen found that nobody would buy of them, or even sell to them. Throughout the Catholic rural districts of Ireland, the clergy were dependent now upon the government, or upon private charity, for mere sustenance ; while large county meetings in Carlow, Cork, and elsewhere, were passing resolutions and issuing addresses which were almost alike in matter and form, and of which the following is a fair specimen :² “ Resolved, that it is a glaring wrong to compel an impoverished Catholic people to support in pampered luxury the richest clergy in the world,—a clergy from whom the Catholics do not experience even the return of common gratitude,—a clergy who in times past opposed to the last the political freedom of the Irish people, and at the present day are opposed to reform and a liberal scheme of education for their countrymen. That ministers of the God of charity should not, by misapplication of all the tithes to their own private uses, thus deprive the poor of their patrimony,—nor should ministers of peace adhere with such desperate tenacity to a system fraught with dissension, hatred, and ill-will.” The grievance was real enough,—obvious to all who were not blinded by a superstitious worship of man-made law, so as to be insensible to those ulterior laws which it is impious to disregard. There was, indeed, no time to lose ; but, unhappily, there was no man in power free and bold enough broadly to assert the higher laws : and thus the lower was not withdrawn, but only feebly mended ; so that the change was found ineffectual. The work had to be done over again ; and the chief part of it—the reduction of the Protestant Church to the needs of the Protestant population—has to be done yet, while Ireland appears as far from being tranquillized as ever.

The Act, which bears date June 1, 1832, authorizes the Lord

¹ Annual Register, 1832, p. 284.

² Cork Resolutions, 1832.

Lieutenant of Ireland to advance 60,000*l.* to the Irish clergy who could prove themselves unable to collect their tithes for the year 1831.¹ Their claims for that year thus became a debt from the Irish people to the government, recoverable by the powers of government. The claim of the clergy to any former arrears was not to be prejudiced by this Act, which was designed for temporary relief, and to interpose the government between the irritated people and the clergy. The government was to levy the arrears. Many in the House asked at once whether the government would be able to levy the arrears,—defeated as it had been in endeavoring to aid the clergy to do so. The Bill was proffered under a pledge from government that a tithe commutation should be instituted, which alone could justify the temporary measure of an advance to the clergy. The Act passed rapidly through both Houses, and became law on the 1st of June. It was July before the further and permanent measures of government regarding tithes were brought forward; and, as the Minister declared, the session was too far advanced to admit of the passage of them all. They were three. The first rendered the existing Tithe-Composition Act permanent and compulsory, instead of voluntary, and for a term of twenty-one years.² The second constituted the bishop and beneficed clergy of every diocese a corporation for the management of tithe business, whereby individual clergymen would be relieved from the difficulties and dissensions attendant on a prosecution of their own claims. The corporation would levy and distribute the tithe for the diocese. The third provided for the redemption of the tithe by all who might wish to buy up their freedom from the charge. Sixteen years' purchase was the amount proposed; and permission was to be given to possessors of mortgaged and entailed estates to mortgage them further, in the first case, to the extent necessary for this object,—such mortgage to have precedence of all that existed before; and, in the other case, to sell as much of the entailed estates as should be necessary for the redemption of the tithe.

This last and most important of the three Bills was left over to the next session.³ It was the wish of ministers to carry the other two; but they succeeded only with the first,—the Act by which the tithes composition in Ireland was made compulsory and permanent.

The Relief Act would not work. The clergy were as much hated as ever for giving in to the government an account of the arrears of 1831. A clergyman in Tipperary was shot dead on his own lawn.⁴ The son of another, and his driver, were left

¹ 2 Will. IV. c. 41.

² 2 and 3 Will. IV. c. 119

³ Hansard, xiv. pp. 100–109.

⁴ Annual Register, 1832, p. 296.

on the highway; the one dead, the other supposed to be so. The people would not permit the posting of notices of arrears; and, in the affrays caused in this process, several lives were lost at different points; and this furnished occasion to O'Connell for cries for vengeance for the Irish blood that was shed,—cries which told with prodigious effect. It had been clear to many, from the first, that this was a game at which government could not play. Defeat, and victory by force of soldiery, were equally fatal. The issue was defeat. Towards the end of the next session, the avowal of ministers in Parliament was, that, out of a sum of 104,285*l.* of arrears due for 1831, government had been able to levy only 12,000*l.*; and that amount “had been collected with great difficulty, and some loss of life.”¹ Government had decided to abandon all processes under the existing law, and to seek reimbursement in some other form, after having paid to the clergy the arrears of 1832, and the amounts due in the present year; which, together with those of 1831, now reached the sum of about a million. This amount of a million was to be provided by an issue of exchequer bills. This sum supposed a deduction from the claims of the clergy, for the advantage of secure and immediate payment. The re-imbursement was to be by means of a general land-tax for a term of years; exemption being granted to those who could prove that they had paid their tithes. These propositions were warmly debated. The Conservatives condemned all concession, and claimed for the Church and clergy the uttermost farthing of their dues. The Irish members condemned the levy of tithe in any form; declared that the government was now regarded as a great tithe-proctor, and hated accordingly; and foretold a repetition, with aggravation, of the outrages of preceding years, on every attempt to levy the land-tax. Many of the Liberal party, who yet would not desert the government, complained of the issue of the million under the name of a loan, when everybody knew that it would not prove recoverable, and would be in fact a gift to the Irish Church which they had no inclination to make. The Conservatives yielded from pity and respect for the suffering clergy; the Liberals, from a dislike to embarrass the government; and the Irish members could make no head against so many adversaries. The Bill for collecting the arrears of tithes therefore passed the Lords on the 28th of August, 1833.²

Act of 1833.

The next year the subject had to be brought up again. There was infinite mischief in this annual debating on a topic so charged with irritation to all parties; and now, at this late day, came out some facts, which, if they had been understood earlier, as they ought to have been, would have convinced so large a majority of

¹ Hansard, xx. p. 342.

² Hansard, xx. p. 895.

the insufferable irksomeness of the imposition of tithe in Ireland, as to have insured its being got rid of long ago. Mr. Littleton was now Secretary for Ireland; and he made his disclosures, and rendered his account, on the 20th of February.

On the 4th of that month, the King's speech had recommended a consideration of "a final adjustment of tithes" in Ire-
land; and, in his remarks on the motion for the address, 1834.

the Duke of Wellington had said that the Irish clergy were in precisely the same miserable situation at present that they had been in before the passage of measures for their relief; and he considered that "that most deserving race of men" was in danger of utter destruction,—a statement which was not contradicted by Lord Grey in his reply to the Duke's speech.¹ After two years of experiment and debate, the Irish Secretary was now compelled to call the attention of Parliament to a new measure; but it was to be four years yet before this single point was settled. At the outset of his speech, Mr. Littleton made an avowal which might prudently have been taken to heart before, so as to save years of "chronic civil war," much misery of mind, and the loss of many lives.² Mr. Littleton begged the House "to bear in mind, that the statute-book had been loaded with enactments by the legislatures of both countries for the purpose of giving the proprietors of tithes effectual means to enforce the law. The whole of those enactments had proved ineffectual. Many of them of the most severe description, extending even to capital punishment, had proved utterly useless." No one could won-
der at this who heard the statement that followed of Tardy truth about tithes.
the vexatious incidence of the Irish tithe. Owing to the extreme subdivision of land, the amounts were small,—sometimes literally beyond expression; and, in such cases, the debtor was one who had no money, or ready means of payment, and to whom it was exasperating to be called on, from time to time, for a religious tax, so paltry, and yet so inconvenient and so hurting to his conscience. In a parish in Carlow, the sum owing by 222 defaulters was a farthing each.³ "A return of the actual number of defaulters whose debts were under a farthing, and rise by farthings up to a shilling, would exhibit a very large proportion of the gross number. In some instances, the charge upon the land amounted to only seven parts of a farthing. When he informed the committee that many of the smaller sums were payable by three or four persons, some idea might be formed of the difficulty of collecting tithes in Ireland. The highest aggregate charge was against those who owed individually about 2*d.*; and he would then beg to remind the committee, that it was not so

¹ Hansard, xxi. p. 15.

² Hansard, xxi. p. 578.

³ Hansard, xxi. p. 578.

much the sum, as the situation of the individual, that rendered these charges oppressive. Twopence to one might be as great an impost as 2*l.* to another. There was another great severity connected with the question of tithes. They were not simple. One proprietor alone did not come to the poor man to demand his tithes; but many, whose interests were irreconcilable and adverse, fastened upon him. There were different kinds of tithes, — the vicarial, rectorial, and inappropriate, — all often fastening on the same individual, who was bound to meet the separate demands of each tithe-owner. The opposition to tithes, then, though it might receive an impulse from agitation, was not to be wholly traced to that source. There was a deeper source in the severity of the impost itself.” This was all very true; the disaster was, that it had not been known sooner. Such had been the state of the case during preceding years of legislation; during years when the Irish were called purely ungrateful, because the Emancipation Act did not tranquillize them. A quieter procedure on their part would have been wiser and more virtuous; but there was also little wisdom in the expectation that quietness would rise up and spread among an excitable and long-injured people, while a grievance like this was ignored by a government which called itself liberal and friendly to Ireland. Now that the ministers had at last discovered that they had grievance, as well as agitation, to deal with, the method in which they proposed to deal with it was this, — that all compositions for tithes should cease from the 1st of next November; and that the amount

Proposed Act of 1834. should be paid in the form of an annual land-tax to the King, who should cause provision to be made out of it, in land or money, for the clergy and other tithe-owners.¹ This land-tax was to be redeemable. Mr. O’Connell, and other members from Ireland, vehemently opposed this proposal, reasonably alleging that it would merely establish the same impost under another name. They did not succeed now in delaying the introduction of the Bill; but, on the 30th of July, when it was in committee, Mr. O’Connell had his revenge for the moment. He objected to the proposal, that government should recover the amount of the tithes; said that they would never succeed in taming the Irish people by pretending to throw salt on the tails of the landlords; and moved that the tithes should be made payable immediately from the landlords to the clergy, after being reduced 40 per cent. This motion was in the form of an amendment to the third clause of the Bill; and it was carried by a very large majority, — the numbers being 82 to 33.

After taking time to consider, the ministers determined to go on with the Bill.² They never would have proposed a large

¹ Hansard, xxi. p. 591.

² Hansard, xxi. p. 771.

reduction in the incomes of the Irish clergy; but as the House of Commons had declared itself broadly in favor of such a reduction, and it would facilitate the settling of the system, they could have no objection. And they believed that the clergy — to whom individually the reduction would be only $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent — would be willing and thankful to receive that amount, in consideration of the security, punctuality, and peaceableness which would now attend the payments. The Lord Chancellor put it to the Peers, when the Bill came before them, whether any one of them, deriving a nominal income of 100,000*l.* from his estates, would not be very glad to receive in gold, on a certain day, without a chance of disappointment, 77,500*l.*, with a release from all disputes, pains, and penalties, from bad or impoverished tenants. If their own bishops were to be believed, however, the great majority of the Irish clergy were hostile to the measure. In that case, — if they were still able and disposed to stand out, under the risk of Irish outrage, for the full hire of their spiritual service, — the compassion of Parliament was thrown away upon them, and that of the nation must be reserved for the suffering minority of the clergy who were ready to sacrifice something for peace, and to avoid causing their brother to offend. But even these more high-minded sufferers were not to be aided yet. On the motion for the second reading in the Lords, Lord Ellenborough moved that the Bill should be read that day six months, and threw it out by a majority of 67 out of Bill lost. 311 votes, by proxy or present.¹ The bishops who were in favor of the measure were those of Derry, Chichester, and Norwich. On the other side were the Archbishops of Canterbury and Cashel, and nineteen bishops. The division showed that the spiritual Peers were quite of Lord Melbourne's opinion — which was earnestly expressed — as to the unspeakable importance of the measure; only they took an opposite view of it. It was but for a short time, for within five years they had to yield; and, meanwhile, their conduct, whether attributed to pride, to greed, to enmity to the Catholic Irish, or merely to such narrowness of view as ill becomes legislators, went as far to impair the dignity and influence of the Church among those who watched the case, as their success in throwing out the Reform Bill three years before.

Thus ended in failure the endeavor of the Whig Administration to deal with the Irish tithe question; a difficulty so radical as to require radical treatment, as has been since practically acknowledged. The effect of merely tampering with it was very disastrous: the government was foiled; the clergy sank into a deeper slough of popular hatred; and the Irish Church lost

¹ Hansard, xxi. p. 1204.

every year more of its dignity in the eyes of its own well-wishers.

The great question of its preservation in any form had now for some time been discussed; and so discussed, that it was necessary for the Administration of the time — whatever it might be — to take up the argument. Everybody knew that the chief incitement to the repeal agitation was the hope of getting rid of the Church. The Tories were disposed to defy the repeal cry, and all agitation, and to uphold the dues of the Church, even to the last penny of church-cess, and the smallest fraction of a farthing of tithe. A large number of the Liberal party were for so abating the Irish Church as to throw its maintenance upon its own members, and reduce its ministers to some proportion to their flocks. The endeavor of the Administration was to keep a middle course between these extreme parties. In 1833, the government proposed to empower a board of ecclesiastical commissioners, by Act of Parliament, to make extensive changes in the Irish Church, which, it was hoped, would be so manifestly for the advantage of all parties as to secure a sufficient support in Parliament.

Irish Ecclesiastical commission.

It appears, by a census purposely taken in 1834, that the proportion of the numbers of the Protestant Church in Ireland to that of Catholics and Dissenters was this: The Catholics were 6,436,060; the members of the Established Church were 853,160; and the Dissenters, 665,540, — that is, while the Catholics were above 80 per cent, the Church Protestants were just above 10, and the Dissenters 8, per cent.¹ The revenues of this Church were 865,525*l.*, — above 1*l.* per head of its members! There were nearly 1400 benefices, — of which forty-one did not contain a single Protestant, twenty had under five, and 165 contained under five and twenty. In 157 benefices no service was performed, the incumbent being an absentee. There were four archbishops and eighteen bishops for this little flock. It was impossible that such a Church could long be endured in a country so peopled; and the reductions now proposed by government were very considerable.²

Two archbishops and ten bishops were to be the last of their name. Their dioceses were to be united with others as opportunity arose; and, on the death of the primate, the income of his see was to be reduced from 14,500*l.* to 10,000*l.* Deans and chapters were no longer to enjoy dignity without work. They were to be abolished, or to undertake the cure of souls. Sinecure benefices were to be endured no longer; the commissioners might suspend the appointment of ministers who had not done duty for three years before. The first-fruits, which were a

Reductions.

¹ Polit. Dict. i. p. 854.

² Hansard, xv. pp. 567–576.

trouble and grievance producing little return, were to be abolished, and replaced by a tax on benefices and episcopal incomes, rising in its percentage from the smallest benefice not under 200*l.* a year, to the vast incomes of some of the bishops; the humble livings paying 5 per cent, and any episcopal income exceeding 1500*l.* a year, 15 per cent. It was expected that by the sum thus raised—about 69,000*l.* a year—a sufficient provision would be secured for the repair of churches and conducting of the service, so that the odious impost of church-cess might be abolished, its amount being estimated at 70,000*l.* a year. The one remaining point was that which occasioned the fiercest disputes,—disputes which lasted for a course of years, and are certainly destined to be renewed hereafter. In opening the scheme of government for altering—to the advantage of all other parties, without injury to the clergy—the terms for letting the lands of the Church, Lord Althorp did not conceal his opinion, that any additional funds accruing from such change of management were ^{Appropriation} fairly to be considered State funds, applicable to ^{doctrine.} general State purposes. Supposing the Church left where she was before,—deprived of nothing present or future,—the profits of any improvement suggested and achieved by the government might be claimed by the government for the good of the State. The amount anticipated from this source was about, or nearly, three millions.

The government were anxious to lose no time, “under existing circumstances,” in carrying this Bill. It was brought in on the 11th of March.¹ There was debate about the time of the second reading, and one of those mistakes to which the present Ministry seemed to be doomed; so that a ^{Delays.} delay of many weeks ensued. This was a Tax-Bill, and it was necessary to introduce it in a committee of the whole House; and thus, as the point had to be argued, the ministers to be convicted of error, and the whole matter gone over again, it was the 6th of May before it reached the second reading. It was then very nearly dismissed a second time, on account of an oversight of ministers in reciting a message from the King which had never been delivered to Parliament; but the Speaker decided that the objectors should have brought forward their point before the first reading, and must now wait till the Bill was in committee, by which time the necessary message from the King might be received. The majority on this occasion was large in favor of the measure; many members, however, giving notice that they should ultimately oppose it, unless it was decided in committee that all accruing funds whatsoever should be devoted to ecclesiastical purposes. It was in vain that government

¹ Hansard, xvi. p. 647.

explained that the fund from new church leases should be applied to educational and other objects which ought to be those of the Church. That provision was expunged from the Bill in committee. It was also decreed that the tax on clerical incomes should date only from the death of the present incumbents. With these alterations, the Bill passed the Lower House on the 8th of July, 1833, by a majority of 274 to 94;¹ a proportion which shows how much stronger was the apprehension of danger from Ireland, than the cry, loud as it was, about confiscation of the property of the Church.

The Peers were believed to intend to make a vigorous rally against this very important Bill, with whose passage the existence of the Ministry was understood to be bound up. On a recent occasion, when the Reform Bill had been in danger, a well-timed vote of the Commons of confidence in ministers had been found of service; and it was now proposed again to intimate to the Peers, that the Commons had a very decided will in regard to the reformation of the Irish Church. Sir J. Wrottesley, after due notice, and in opposition to the entreaties of ministers, moved for a call of the House on the 17th of July,—the day of the second reading in the Lords; and he was nearly successful,—125 voting with him, and 160 against him.²

The opposition in the Lords was strong, but not effectual. The support given to the measure was somewhat grudging; but it was sufficient,—no doubt for the reason assigned, in a few remarkable words, by the Earl of Wicklow for his share in carrying the Bill through.³ “He could not be taken to be a supporter of ministers because he meant to vote for their present measure. He conceived that every act of theirs bore upon it the stamp of revolution,—the present no less than others; but he would for that very reason vote for the present Bill, because, if he did not, he might on a future occasion—like him with the books of the Sibyl—have to pay a higher price for less value.” The Duke of Wellington, who had more reason than most men to know what to dread from Irish discontent, supported the Bill, on condition of certain amendments; and all went well, except that ministers were outvoted on the point of the disposal of the revenues of suspended appointments. By a majority of two, it was decided that such revenues should be applied to the repairs of the church and glebe-house; and then any surplus should go into the hands of the commissioners. After consideration, Lord Grey and his colleagues determined not to throw up the Bill for the sake of this one point. It passed, on the 30th of July, by a majority of 54, out of 216 votes, and in the midst of a vigorous recording of protests by alarmed Peers.

Irish Church
Temporalities
Bill passes.

¹ Hansard, xix. p. 301. ² Hansard, xix. p. 662. ³ Hansard, xix. p. 761.

Of these protests, the most remarkable one is that of the Duke of Cumberland, who reverts to the old ground — by that time forgotten by every one else — of the coronation oath,¹ of which he declares this measure a clear violation. The commissioners appointed under the Bill were the Primate of Ireland and Archbishop of Dublin, the Lord Chancellor and Chief Justice of Ireland, and four of the Irish bishops. Their powers were great; and it was confidently hoped that they would be put to vigorous use. But no one supposed that any thing that they could do would finally settle the difficulty of the Irish Church; and it would be so long before the relief of their measures could be practically felt, that much might happen meantime.

Though the state of Ireland was less disturbed, in the course of a few months, the agitation for repeal went on so vigorously that the royal speech made express reference to it at the opening of the session of 1834, and both Houses of Parliament replied in a special address; it being well understood by all parties, that the Church grievance supplied the whole body and spirit of the agitation. Men who agreed that the fact was so, were far from agreeing as to what should be done; and none differed more irreconcilably than the members of the Cabinet, as events presently showed.

In the preceding year, Mr. Stanley had ceased to be Irish Secretary, having entered the Cabinet as Colonial Secretary when Lord Goderich became Earl of Ripon, with the office of Lord Privy Seal. It was at that time that Mr. Littleton (since Lord Hatherton) became Irish Secretary, and entered upon the warfare which his office imposed upon any one compelled daily to hold a sort of conservative ground against Mr. O'Connell and his friends in the House. Towards Mr. Stanley the Irish members had been to the last degree fierce; and he was not of a temper to keep the peace under provocation, or so made as to conceal the disgust and contempt from which he has ever appeared to suffer, as from a chronic malady, all the days of his life. What the colonies might have to say to the change would be known in due course; meantime, it was a comfort to the ministers to see a good-tempered man, who seemed to be liked by the Irish members, in the place of one who was so vehemently hated by them. The difference of opinion in the Cabinet about the power of the State over any new revenues of the Irish Church, was of less consequence, as the chief of the minority — who called such a doctrine a plan of confiscation — was now occupied with colonial affairs. The difference might for some time longer have caused nothing more serious than preparatory dis-

¹ Hansard, xx. p. 127.

cussion, but for the subject of the Irish Church being brought up by Mr. Ward, member for St. Alban's, on the 27th of May, in a motion for the reduction of its establishment, as it exceeded the spiritual wants of the Protestant population, and as it is the right of the State to regulate the distribution of church property in such manner as Parliament may determine.¹ The motion was seconded by Mr. Grote, one of the members for London, who had scarcely begun to address the House when Lord Althorp received some information which induced him, at the close of Mr. Grote's speech, to request the House to adjourn the debate from the present Tuesday to the Monday following. On this question — of the right of the State over any proceeds of church property — the Administration could not bear a touch. The news which had reached Lord Althorp was, that the leaders of the minority in the Cabinet — Mr. Stanley and Sir James Graham — had resigned. They had hurried on their court-dresses, and gone to the King, to surrender office. Their example was immediately followed by Lord Ripon and the Duke of Richmond. The single Tory, and two "Canningites," were now gone; and the Ministry, being wholly Liberal, — or supposed to be so, — could henceforth work more freely. Such was the speculation in the House of Commons, in Lombard Street, and in Ireland. Lord Auckland went to the Admiralty; Mr. Spring Rice, to the Colonial Office; and the privy seal was held by Lord Carlisle. Mr. Poulett Thompson at the same time became president, instead of vice-president, of the Board of Trade; and the Marquis of Conyngham succeeded the Duke of Richmond at the Post Office.

The opponents of a liberal policy knew what was the weakest point of the Administration, — of this Administration, as of several that had preceded; the timidity and deficient ability of the King. They lost no time in attacking this weak point. The day after the debate had been so strangely interrupted was the King's birthday festival; and the Irish bishops went up to the throne with an address, signed most numerous by Irish prelates and clergy, deprecating changes in the establishment.² Whether the King's mind was overfull of the subject before, so as to flow out at the first touch of his feelings, or whether any circumstance at the moment tempted him away from the ordinary practice in replying to such addresses, there is no saying; but he poured out a set of sentiments, ideas, and promises, which placed himself and his government in a position of great embarrassment, and grievously aggravated the prevalent excitement. This extraordinary speech began with the words: "I now remember you have a right to require of me to be resolute

King's
declaration.

¹ Hansard, xxiii. p. 1396.

² Annual Register, 1834, p. 43.

in defence of the Church." The King went on to assure the eagerly listening clergy, that the Church of England and Ireland should be preserved unimpaired by him; and that, if any of the inferior arrangements in the discipline of the Irish Church required amendment, — "which, however, he greatly doubted, — he hoped it would be left to the bishops to correct them, without interference on any hand. He was completing his sixty-ninth year, and must prepare to leave the world with a conscience clear in regard to the maintenance of the Church." "I have spoken more strongly than usual," he said in conclusion, with tears running down his cheeks, "because of unhappy circumstances that have forced themselves upon the observation of all. The threats of those who are enemies of the Church make it the more necessary for those who feel their duty to that Church to speak out. The words which you hear from me are, indeed, spoken by my mouth; but they flow from my heart." He had, somewhat unnecessarily, assured his hearers that his speech was not a prepared one, got by heart, but uttered from the feeling of the moment. As such an indiscretion must be infinitely embarrassing to his ministers, the utmost pains were taken to scatter this speech through the country without the delay of an hour, that the House of Commons and the ministers might be overawed before the renewal of the debate on Mr. Ward's motion, the next Monday.

Meantime, the ministers did not resign. They had had experience before of the weakness of the King, and did not think it right to give up the country to be governed by the leaders of the minority, under a sovereign who could not help agreeing with the last speaker, and who was always impetuous on behalf of his latest impression. The ministers did not resign; but the general conviction of their insecurity in office was so strong that Mr. Ward declined to withdraw his motion, saying that the assertion of its principle was made doubly important by the probability that men would presently be in power who would need such a check from the legislature.¹ During the week, it had become known that Lord Grey had declared that he had neither nerve nor spirits for the vigorous reconstruction of the Cabinet; and that his predominant wish — to have Lord Durham there — had been overborne by the Lord Chancellor and Lord Lansdowne. Two addresses to the Premier had been presented on the part of members of the House of Commons: the one, a declaration of confidence in Lord Grey; the other, prepared after the intrigues in the Cabinet had become known, expressive of dissatisfaction at the discountenance of popular principles in the new appointments. The ministerial papers themselves openly warned

¹ Spectator, 1834, p. 508.

the nation, that the government was only "patched up," to get through the session; and that, before the year was out, unless the matter were looked to in time, the nation would be at the mercy of the court, which was itself in the hands of the Church.

Under such circumstances, Mr. Ward refused to withdraw his motion.¹ He was probably aware that Mr. Hume was about to quote a letter from Lord Anglesea to the Premier, in which he insisted on a large reform of the Church as absolutely essential to the peace of Ireland; and he could quote as a sanction to his motion the words of Lord Althorp himself, a few months before: "If, by any act of the legislature, new value can be given to any property belonging to the Church, that new value will not properly belong to the Church, because it is an acquisition dependent on such act of the legislature, and may be appropriated immediately to the use of the State."² Mr. Ward's anxiety was to re-assert this principle; and pitiable was the position of Lord Althorp, if he was really about to evade that declaration of his own. His position was pitiable. He was wont to say, with his good-humored smile, that it was hard upon him to force him to be a statesman, when nature had made him a grazier; and the lot was doubly hard which threw him into a Cabinet where there was no power of will, no enlightened union, no combined working faculty, to sustain the efficiency and dignity of the government when the *appui* of popular will and popular dictation was withdrawn. Lord Grey was aged, worn, and weary; Lord Lansdowne was for taking a middle course, and evading difficulties, on all occasions whatever. Mr. Stanley had aggravated all existing difficulties, and created many new ones, by his porcupine demeanor; and the whole Administration was kept in perpetual hot-water by the intrigues and indiscretions of the Lord Chancellor. Thus disunited among themselves, struggling in a slough of difficulties, where no one could help another, and the people withdrawing from them further and further every day, they contradicted themselves and each other, gave pledges and forgot or dropped them, strove in the first place always to evade difficulties which they had not faculty or influence to overcome, had long lost their popularity, and stood a spectacle of weakness to the weak sovereign himself. Thus, Lord Althorp's position on the evening of the 2d of June was truly a pitiable one.

By prodigious exertion, a plan for a commission of inquiry respecting the Irish Church had been framed, and commissioners found, by the Monday morning. In the afternoon, a council of the supporters of the Cabinet was held in Downing Street, at which the procedure of the evening was determined on. Mr. Ward was to be outvoted at any risk, as his

¹ Hansard, xxiv. p. 21.

² Hansard, xv. p. 574.

success would bring on a decision of the perilous question about church property, cause the dissolution of the Ministry, and, no doubt, a general election, in which the Church and State question would be the watchword. The supporters of the Ministry knew that their constituents were in a mood which it would not be pleasant to encounter; and they were thankful to learn that government had provided a means of escape from either affirming or denying Mr. Ward's principle.

When they went to the House, they found it surrounded by a crowd, and so filled that it was difficult for them to make their way to their seats. Mr. Ward's speech was brief, courteous, but firm. Lord Althorp¹ then announced the intention of the government to issue a special commission of inquiry, composed of laymen, which should visit every parish in Ireland, and report its population, under the heads of the three religions, its spiritual provisions, and its ecclesiastical revenues. The Church party regarded the measure as merely a preparation for "confiscation;" and the Liberals saw no occasion for further evidence on a point of fact which was undisputed, while the principle which was the point of dispute was passed over in silence, and nothing gained by this device but more time for the government to shuffle on. Lord Althorp declared that the commission was in fact already issued; that he saw no necessity for Parliament to pronounce on the principle of Mr. Ward's motion, and that he should move the previous question. This he did, and obtained an overwhelming majority, — of 276 in a House of 516.²

In the other House, the Premier had to run the gantlet between the lines of objectors to the new commission; and there really was no good answer to give to the complaint, that the ecclesiastical commission of the preceding year had been agreed to on the supposition of its being a final measure, and that no one had dreamed of its being overridden by another commission, before it had had time to show how it would do its work. The true answer to this would have been, that the ministers were as far from dreaming of such a thing as anybody else, till recent perplexities had put it into their heads. From this moment, the ministers were incessantly called on for explanations of their views on this great subject of the appropriation of Church revenues by the State; and on different occasions they expressed themselves with varying degrees of explicitness. On the 23d of June, Mr. O'Connell moved an instruction to the committee on the Tithe Bill, that whatever surplus remained after the wants of the Protestant Church were duly provided for, should be applied to purposes of general utility, — which he explained to mean, not the making of roads and bridges, but purposes of

¹ Hansard, xxiv. p. 13.

² Hansard, xxiv. p. 86.

charity and of education, in whose benefits the needy of all faiths should share alike. On this occasion, Lord John Russell and Lord Althorp declared their agreement with Mr. O'Connell, if the ground were taken that these purposes were of a religious character, leaving open the question whether such funds could be applied — by not only legal right, for that was clear, but by moral and equitable right — to secular purposes.¹ The question was thus transferred to a new ground, — the shaking bog of metaphysics, on which it would be for ever impossible for any legislature to decide and act. It is no subject for legislation whether charity and education are religious or secular works; nor can it be settled whether Parliament, having a clear legal right to dispose of any funds, must have a proved moral and equitable right also; nor how a moral and equitable right is provable or even assignable, otherwise than by affirming or repealing the legal right. The only thing clear was, that nothing could be actually done in the matter for the relief of the Irish Catholics, and the satisfaction of the discontented throughout the kingdom, while the war was one of metaphysical distinctions.

The whole bearing and importance of this question, in 1834, can hardly be understood without taking a view of the condition of religion and the Church in England at that date. This will presently come before us, when we shall have to show what were the views and aims of the Whig Administration in this direction. The story of what they achieved during their present term of office is nearly concluded; and we see them now in a position of perplexity and weakness which it is clear they could not long maintain. They must obtain more strength, or sink.

In the preceding year, a Bill had been passed which conferred extraordinary powers on the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, for putting down the fearful disturbances of that country. Among the provisions of that Bill were two of eminent importance: that of suspending the ordinary course of justice in favor of martial law, and of prohibiting political meetings and discussions. The Bill was reported by the Irish authorities to have worked well; and to the Premier's mind it was clear that it ought to be renewed on its expiration in August, 1834, with the omission only of the portion relating to martial law. To others, however, the expediency was not so clear; and it appears that the same want of confidence between the members of the government, or other causes of disunion, existed in regard to this as to other measures; for it is scarcely possible to doubt, among much conflicting evidence, that, up to a certain day, it was not the intention of government to renew the Coercion Bill entire, except as to martial law, but to leave out that portion relating to public

¹ Hansard, xxiv. pp. 753, 801.

meetings which most exasperated the wrath of Mr. O'Connell. Mr. Littleton, the Irish Secretary, certainly relied on this; and he sent for Mr. O'Connell to assure him of this agreeable prospect, hoping, as Mr. Littleton himself avowed, to deter O'Connell from agitating on the occasion of the pending Wexford election.¹ The communication was made under the seal of secrecy. It is hard to know whether to wonder most at the simplicity which supposed that O'Connell was to be trusted with a political secret, or at the folly of imagining that political secrets of such weight can be kept, except among confederates. Mr. O'Connell explained how he conceived himself relieved from obligations to secrecy, and revealed the awkward fact that Mr. Littleton had told him that the Irish government was opposed to the renewal of the Coercion Bill.² The agitator had immediately caused the repeal candidate for Wexford to retire; and, when it was too late, he received a message from Mr. Littleton, that the government intended to enforce the whole Coercion Bill, except the part relating to martial law. He was naturally indignant, declared himself tricked out of the Wexford election, called upon the Irish Secretary to retire, and told the whole story in the House, — inciting his opponent to deliver his version first. On inquiry in the other House, the Premier and the Lord Chancellor declared, the next evening, that they knew nothing of any negotiations between the Irish Secretary and Mr. O'Connell, and that they did not believe that any such had taken place. Great must have been their astonishment when they read the Secretary's own statement of the transaction, which was not so materially different from Mr. O'Connell's as to exempt him from the charge of "gross indiscretion." His plea for the change of the policy of the Cabinet was, that new circumstances became known to government, which justified a renewal of the provisions against political meetings; but, as he did not explain what those circumstances were, the plea did not improve his case. The general impression was, that he had been sincere, but most unwise; that he ought to have resigned office, on such a conviction of indiscretion; and that the affairs of the nation could no longer be safely confided to an Administration so ill combined, and whose proceedings were so desultory and immature.

To the Premier, the affair must have been deeply wounding; and it proved to be fatal to his political life. He was aware, as we know by Lord Althorp's explanations, that a valuable minority in his Cabinet were of the same opinion with the Lord Lieutenant, — namely, that the clauses against public meetings in Ireland need not be re-enacted; and that this minority had

Negotiations
with Mr.
O'Connell

Mr. Little-
ton's explana-
tion.

¹ Hansard, xxiv. p. 1101.

² Hansard, xxiv. p. 1106.

yielded the point only to avoid breaking up the Cabinet; and now that Mr. O'Connell had been admitted by the Irish Secretary to a peep at this state of things—he, of all men!—what remained of dignity or efficiency to his government?¹ When he moved the second reading of the Coercion Bill on the 4th of July, he spoke low and hurriedly. His son-in-law, Lord Durham, opposed the re-enactment of the clauses against political meetings, in words as few and moderate as his honest convictions permitted; and his opposition was received with a good grace by the Minister; but it was one of the incidents which wrought against the tottering government.

This was on Friday night. On Saturday, Mr. Littleton tendered his resignation. It was not accepted,—indignant as Lord Grey had declared himself about the transaction with Mr. O'Connell. It was supposed that there was little hope of filling up the vacancy, in a perilous crisis, with an able man who was sure of a seat in the House,—so deep was now the unpopularity of the Whig Ministry. But, on Monday, Lord Althorp resigned, and ^{Resignation of} would not be persuaded to remain in office. High as ^{Lord Althorp.} his character stood for honesty and courage, he was aware that it would not sustain him under the odium of carrying through the Commons such a Coercion Bill as he was now universally known to have condemned in Council. He persisted in retiring; and then Lord Grey saw no other course ^{Of Lord Grey.} than resigning too. By Lord Althorp's retirement, he lost his best colleague; the Coercion Bill would have no authority now, if even he could pass it; and, if he relinquished it, his belief was well known to be that Ireland could not be governed without it. On Tuesday he presented his resignation to the King.

On Wednesday evening, the last act was to be done. The old statesman, now in his seventy-first year, had to take leave of power. He was worn and weakened by the toils and responsibilities of office, and he was conscious of having fallen somewhat behind the time,—earnest as he was in saying that the times went too fast, and not he too slow. The close of his term of power was mortifying, if not ignoble, in its character,—affording but too much incitement to the taunts and vindictiveness of adversaries,—taunts and triumphs which were not spared even on this occasion. ^{Lord Grey's} Twice he rose, and murmured a few ^{farewell.} words, stopped, and sank down upon his seat. The House cheered him, but he seemed unable to rise.² The Duke of Wellington occupied a few minutes in presenting petitions, in order to give Lord Grey time to recover himself. When the old man rose a third time, he spoke feebly and tremulously; but he

¹ Hansard, xxiv. p. 1337.

² Hansard, xxiv. p. 1305.

gathered strength as he proceeded, and so spoke as to interest all feelings, of friend or foe, except where, as in the cases of the Duke of Wellington and the Lord Chancellor, an overpowering fear for the Church and other institutions, and personal regards, hardened the heart and closed the mind against reverent emotions and clear convictions, which were shared by all others who had the privilege to hear. The Duke naturally fired up at the implied charge of vacillation against his brother, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in regard to the Coercion Bill; and it was natural that, with a brotherly feeling for Lord Wellesley's responsibilities, he should vehemently assert that Lord Grey's resignation, being unnecessary, was a desertion of his sovereign: but the rest of the speech, in which he reviewed the measures of Lord Grey's government, was nothing short of malignant. One circumstance which could not be overlooked at the time, and cannot pass unnoticed by the reader of our day, is its perfect likeness, in conception and spirit, to Lord Grey's speech against Canning, which fixed the deepest arrow of the flight under which he sank. Lord Grey was less unhappy than Canning in being present to hear what was said of him, instead of learning it from others, and being unable to reply; and, again, the Duke had not power so to express himself as to wound so deeply as Lord Grey; and thus the retribution was not severe, but it must have sorely imbibited the parting moment. It is bitter even to the impartial reader to witness these displays of infirmity, — of that deep-seated infirmity which weakens the moral force of three such men as these, — rendering them unable, not only to appreciate each other's course, but to wait with patience to see the results, — asking Time to be the arbiter, who will be the arbiter in spite of them. The Lord Chancellor's speech drew off the hearers from the painful feelings excited by the Duke, or gave others in their place. There was abundant laudation of Lord Grey, — such as it required courage to offer, face to face, to such a man; but with it a clear rebuke to him for resigning: and upon this followed a sentence or two, which, grave as was the occasion, caused shouts of laughter, — there being few present who did not know something of the state of the King's mind towards the ministers, who were so formidably reforming the Church against his will.¹ The Lord Chancellor "felt that he should not discharge his duty, if, at all sacrifice of his comfort, — at all abandonment of his own ease, — at the destruction, if so it might be, of his own peace of mind, — he did not stand by that gracious monarch and that country whose support — whose cordial and hearty support — he had received during the three years and a half of which he had been a member of the government.

¹ Hansard, xxiv. p. 1325.

After having said this, he need not add that he had not tendered his resignation." When the laughter permitted him to be again heard, he asked: "Did their Lordships think that there was any thing very peculiarly merry or amusing in being Minister at the present time?" No: in the contempt into which this Administration had long been falling, there was nothing that was not painful to all sound-hearted men of every party.

Lord Grey, in his speech, requested a fair judgment from those who thought he had committed errors, and did not anticipate any charge of indifference to principle or deviation from honor. He might well feel this security. Brighter honor never shone through any statesman's life; a nobler consistency never crowned a statesman's career. On this not a syllable need be said: for with him, throughout his life, the word answered to the thought; and he possessed the deep secret of high honor, in other people's feelings being to him as his own. His honor was not of the nice and sensitive character which springs from egotism, and has therefore a dash of cowardice in it: it was of the brave and healthy sort which needs no special care, but flourishes best by thinking seldom of itself. The only approach to a doubt on this part of Lord Grey's character was caused by his profuse distribution of office among his relations; and he thought, with great simplicity, that he had disposed of this complaint in his speech of this night, by asking whether these many relations did not do their work well, and declaring that the family connection generally had grown, not richer, but poorer, since they came into office. Could such a man overlook the truth, that it is unfair to exclude others from office by filling departments with members of one family, and detrimental to the interests of the State to have in its departments an overruling cast of ideas and feelings? Did he not know how strong was the national response to Canning when he complained of the monopoly of government by "a few great families"? And could such a man suppose that the complainants were thinking only of the salaries that his relations engrossed, and not of the honors, powers, occupations, and dignities of office? This was one of the "errors" with which he anticipated that he might be charged. And it is difficult to charge him with any other; for the rest was not error, but incapacity; an induced incapacity, with which he was afflicted — and the nation through him — through the evil operation of aristocratic station, uncorrected by timely political labor, and the extensive intercourses which are a privilege attendant upon it. He knew no more of the British people than he did of the Spaniards or the Germans. He did not see the scope of his own Reform Bill, and could not bear the consequences of his own greatest act, — the fruition of the aim of his whole life.

Lord Grey's
political
character.

When he had himself taken up the House of Lords in his hand, broken its fastenings, and set it down in a lower place, he insisted that it was still where it was before; and he "would stand by his order" against any who declared to the contrary. He governed with a feeble and uncertain hand, because he could not freely throw his mind into the common stock with his colleagues, or induce them to do the same. He respected them, — valued them, — graced them, — but could not make common cause with them. And he fell by insisting on coercing speech in Ireland, when the ruler of Ireland offered to govern that country without a power so stringent, and his own "best arm" in the Cabinet, and some other valuable members, were opposed to the act of despotism. It was needless to protest that he acted from his conscience. Nobody doubted his doing so, in all his political acts. The question was, whether his conscience was illumined by the best lights of intelligence. When the grand inquisitor declared that he acted from conscientious love of his victims; when Francis of Austria and Metternich declared that the Spielberg prisoners were tortured, body and mind, for the sake of the nation; when the Duke of York pleaded conscience for his intended rigor towards the Catholics, — nobody doubted the sincerity of the men. The question was, whether their consciences could be permitted to overrule those of a multitude of other men. And so, in a much milder way, was it now in the case of Lord Grey. The question was, whether speech was to be coerced in Ireland because Lord Grey conscientiously believed it ought. Mr. Littleton expressed in the Commons, on this same night, a remorse which it was painful to witness, for the act by which he had compelled the decision.¹ It was natural that he should do so; but there were few or none who thought, in a little while, that the event was to be lamented. It was not only that the Cabinet could not have stood for any length of time; it was that the manner of Lord Grey's fall, however mortifying to his friends and his party, and pathetic in all eyes, was instructive, alike as a comment on the past, and a warning for the future. And for himself, — his lot was not hard, though less brilliant than it had been. He was nowhere blamed for any fault but that which, perhaps, he had no great objection to be charged with, — an excess of the aristocratic spirit. He retired, amidst universal, if not unmingled sympathy and respect, to enjoy the repose which his years required, in the bosom of a family by whom he was adored. He had had the last experience of civic glory; and he was now to find how much more he enjoyed the serene household glories of a home like his.

¹ Hansard, xxiv. p. 1338.

CHAPTER X.

THE period under review, memorable on many accounts, is for nothing more so than for the perturbations of its religious life. How long the crisis might have been deferred, and what would have been its issue, if the war had been protracted, it is impossible to divine. It was after seventeen years of peace, and with the reforms of a peace period for its proximate cause, that it actually occurred; and sooner or later it must have occurred, under any conditions of the secular life of the nation. As it was, the perturbation was so extraordinary, and to those who were timid by constitution or by creed so fearful, that it seemed as if the fountains of the deeps of men's minds were broken up. Amidst the deluge of conflicting theologies and wills, the Administration and Parliament drifted helplessly and blindly; and it was clear that no good steering was to be expected from them, nor any discovery of dry land where the struggling minds of men might find a footing and rest. Such crises are, as the clear-sighted of all parties admit, an inevitable consequence of a union of Church and State. The firmest friends of that union admit this without hesitation, while declaring the advantages of such an arrangement to preponderate over the occasional inconvenience and risk. As time passes on, and those changes are wrought which never cease, the terms of the union must be remodelled, and newly risen questions must be settled; while it is quite certain that the ministers of the State will not be able fully to enter into the views of those of the Church, and the ministers of the Church must inevitably despise and be shocked at the statesman's views of religious claims and affairs.

When the critical period of indispensable change arrives, all difficulties are aggravated — in the instance of England and her Establishment — by the perpetual existence of three parties within that Church, whose views and habit of mind differ too widely to admit of a peaceable co-existence for any length of time in a Protestant Establishment; though the Romish Church is able, in such a case, to include and occupy them all, without controversy and confusion. This weighty fact has been adverted

to before, in connection with the first manifestation of the great disturbance which was now to reach its height for the time,—that is, when the controversy on the Peterborough questions took place in 1821.¹ That first instance of revived High-Church domination over faith took the nation by surprise; the oppressed clergy petitioned Parliament for relief and justice; almost every voice that was raised at all was raised against the claim of the bishop; and there was one circumstance in the case that was never forgotten, and will never be forgotten,—that no bishop but the one appealed against opened his lips upon the subject, though every endeavor was used in the House of Lords to make the prelates speak. Clear as it was to all that they were in Parliament for the very purpose of guiding the State in such affairs as this, their constrained and ignoble silence showed that they were unprepared for the great controversy, just then opening, between the claims of the Church and the Protestant doctrine of liberty of opinion.

Twelve years elapsed between that discussion in Parliament and the reduction of the Irish Church by the Admin-
 istration of Lord Grey. In the interval, rumors had The Tracta-
rians. spread of the rise of a sect within the Church, whose headquarters were at Oxford; as there had been rumors before of the rise of a Church sect at Cambridge. That at Cambridge had originated the movement called Evangelical, intended to revive the life of religion in the Church, and promoted by the earnest zeal and munificence of its members in filling the pulpits of the Establishment with devout Calvinistic ministers, who caused a powerful religious revival among the aristocratic and wealthy classes of society. The Oxford movement was of a widely different character, representing as it did the opposite party in the Church from that of the Simeons, Wilberforces, and Thorntons. The rumors which stole abroad told of observances which excited no little surprise, while some who heard were amused, and others seriously grieved and alarmed. It was scarcely conceivable that Laud and his ways should have risen up again among us in the nineteenth century; yet those who had seen and heard what went on within the University of Oxford told of priestly claims, and obedience of novices; of homage to the memory of Charles the Martyr; of devout reception and study of ancient tradition and the Christian fathers, and a passionate disparagement of the Reformation and Protestantism; of exclusive reliance on the sacraments of the Church; of the most frequent possible celebration of its services; of the setting-up of oratories and of crosses; of scrupulosity about garments and postures and fasts; and even of auricular confession. Where so

¹ Vol. ii. p. 317.

much was said, something must be true; and it was not long before the Oxford men published to the world ample evidence that some strange things indeed were true.

On occasion of the reduction of the Irish Church, the Oxford party believed the time to be come for them to preach their principles, and save, if it yet might be, the Church and the nation. They denied the rightful power of the government to touch the constitution and revenues of the Church; and they apprehended that Parliament would gratify the earnest desire of a large body of churchmen, in reforming the Book of Common Prayer, through a commission of State appointment. To avert such a desecration, and all further spoliation of the Church, and to obtain perhaps a restitution of what had been taken from her, the Oxford sect resolved to work upon the public mind in all directions, — through the press, as well as by means of the pulpit and private exhortation and vigorous proselyting among the young. According to their own authorized statement, delivered by Mr. Perceval in a letter to the editor of the “*Irish Ecclesiastical Journal*,” their first business was to enforce their tenets through a set of tracts, which gave to the sect, for some years, the name of Tractarians. The leading doctrine of these tracts is that of apostolical succession. The only way of salvation is declared to be through the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; and the only way in which that sacrament can be administered is by the hands of the successors of the apostles, with whom is deposited this sole power of communicating the means of salvation. The necessity of Episcopacy is thus declared, and not merely its expediency; and from this follows a train of doctrines which do not need more than a slight indication. As the Scriptures do not contain any account of the institution of Episcopacy by Christ, some other and co-equal authority must be adduced; and tradition is that co-ordinate authority. Hence follows the exclusive reverence for the Christian fathers, as the historians and registrars of tradition. Hence, too, the reverence for many of the forms and observances of Romanism, which, being traced to an Episcopal foundation, cannot be refused. Hence, too, the indignation and horror at the interference of government with Church funds and offices; and an expressed willingness that the Church should, as soon as possible, be separated from the State. Of these tracts, Dr. Arnold¹ wrote in April, 1834, “They are strenuously puffed by the ‘*British Magazine*,’ and strenuously circulated among the clergy; of course, I do not suppose that any living man out of the clergy is in the slightest danger of being influenced by them, except so far as they may lead him to despise the clergy for countenancing them.” The fact did not

¹ Life of Arnold, i. p. 374.

answer to this anticipation. If the Tractarian clergy might soon be counted by hundreds, their followers, and the diligent readers of the "Tracts for the Times," presently amounted to tens of thousands; and there is nothing to wonder at in this, if we remember the proneness of the human mind to rely upon authority, and to seek safety in definite observances. Far on in the nineteenth century, therefore, the zealous Protestants of the empire saw spectacles which filled them with anger and dismay, — on the one hand, a striking increase of the Catholic body, from the earnestness with which noble and wealthy Catholics applied themselves to use the present crisis for the good of their Church; and, on the other hand, the rise and spread of a body, within and from our own University of Oxford, who were always disparaging Protestantism, and themselves growing so like Catholics, that it was hard for the common run of men who used Protestantism for a political cry to make out the difference. From month to month, there were rumors of one or another Tractarian having gone over to Romanism, — rumors which were highly resented, and proved in the "Tracts" to be necessarily false; and for a while they were not true: but, in no long time, a conversion to Romanism began within the University, and spread so undeniably, that the kindred character of the principles of Romanism and Tractarianism has for some time ceased to be disputed. During this period, then, one of the three parties in the Church was succeeding in substituting, for the previous idea of religion, another whose popular spread made some good men's hearts fail them for fear. Theology in the priesthood, and unlimited obedience in the flock, were now to be the idea of a Christian Church. In many a church there was contention about wearing the surplice; about old and new or revived methods of celebrating the service; about the frequency of the administration of the communion; and other points which the bishops were as sorely perplexed as pressed to solve. As a body, the bishops showed themselves weak and still unprepared. There was no unity of view or action among them on the occurrence of this great schism in the Church; and the multitude added contempt of this weakness to their indignation at the conduct of the spiritual Peers about the Reform Bill, and were at no pains to conceal their feelings. The Archbishop of Canterbury was mobbed at the doors of his own cathedral, — pelted with brickbats, cabbage-stalks, and opprobrious words, to his extreme consternation. The Bishop of London had a year before been prevented from preaching at St. Ann's, Soho, by an intimation that, when he rose in the pulpit, the larger part of the congregation would leave their seats.¹ Much of this was political feeling; but it was aggra-

¹ Annual Register, 1832, Chron. p. 106; Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 167.

vated, and not dispersed, by the irresolute and uncombined conduct of the prelates under the appeal of the Tractarians. The heads of the Church were evidently not ready for the crisis of the Church.

The strongest popular sympathy, in connection with this party, was with a clergyman here and there who fell a victim to his sense of duty in enforcing his rights, — not from the love of lucre, but the fear of surrendering any of the prerogatives of his function. One of these, the Rev. Irvine Whitty, rector of a parish in Ireland, was shot, after having brought forty-five suits for the recovery of tithes at one session.¹ Another was a clergyman in the south of England, who enforced his tithes, under a sense of duty to his Church, to a point which maddened his poor neighbors; and the general feeling was fearfully expressed by a man who shot him dead from behind a haycock in his own field. The popular resentment in these cases followed those who had instituted a false ideal of a Christian Church, rather than the weak men who had been mastered by that idea. While the pity for these victims was yet fresh, every one looked to see what would happen at the installation of the Duke of Wellington as Chancellor of Oxford, at a time so critical. The proceedings there, while very amusing, were significant enough. The young men in the theatre are wont to express their partialities and dislikes, political and religious, on these occasions, — thus giving notice to the world what it has to expect from the rising generation of professional men and legislators; and the watchwords and cries were never more significant than on the present occasion. There were thunders of applause when cheers were asked for the bishops, Mr. Stanley, and the Duke of Cumberland; and never-ending groans at the Irish-Church commission, the Administration, and the Gower-street Company, — meaning the London University.² The word “the Dissenters” was received “with a long-protracted snuffle, and an ejaculation of ‘Amen,’ from several voices, in imitation of the nasal twang of the conventicle.” This, again, was like a restoration of the seventeenth century. The peculiar enmity against the Dissenters, on this occasion, was a piece of retribution on a movement of the Moderate-Church party to obtain admission for them to the universities; and nothing could be more offensive than two cries and their reception, — “The University and her privileges,” and “London University and her want of privileges.” The cheers for Oxford and her exclusiveness were natural and fair enough; but the virulent desire to exclude the Dissenters from privilege everywhere was well understood to be expressed by these lads on

¹ Annual Register, 1832, Chron. p. 183.

² Annual Register, 1834, Chron. p. 80.

behalf of their class and order. Such were the doings — serious and playful — of the High-Church party during this period.

As for the immediately opposing party, — the Low-Church or Evangelical section, — they were active, but less prosperous, than they had been. It appeared that the ^{The Evangelical party.} Tractarian multitude was largely increased from the ranks of the Evangelical party. There were many lowly and tender spirits, worn and anxious with the care of working out their salvation by the constant upholding of their faith at a certain pitch, and afflicted with misgivings about the sufficiency of their personal interest in Christ, and of their assurance of safety, who were glad to turn at once into the shelter of a system where they had the protection of a priesthood, which permitted them to repose their cares upon others, on the simple condition of obedience to definite commands, and which prescribed a clear ritual duty in discharge of obligations which had hitherto weighed heavily upon their consciences. It was natural that the numbers that went over from the Low to the High Church should be considerable. Some of the brightest lights of the sect, too, were extinguished within this period. Its honored and beloved Wilberforce was ^{Death of Wilberforce.} laid in his grave during this time; and to no man did the sect owe so much. His May-day nature was too genial to be clouded by the gloomiest Calvinism. While striving through life to afflict himself with self-reproach and doubts of his safety, as well as to take upon himself — which he did in the noblest sincerity of heart — the woes of all who sinned and suffered, his glorious and exquisite nature broke through all factitious restraints, and made him free, joyous, and benign, as if he had never taken upon his lips that language of his sect which abounds at once in denunciation and terror, in slavishness and pride. He was far above fear and haughtiness alike, though he might strive to feel both; and, while exhorting to the attainment of a specific faith, as the only security for salvation, he so abounded in good works as to earn the wondering veneration of all living men, and the gratitude of unborn generations. The affectionate, confiding, cheerful old man — wise as a sage, and fresh as an infant — sank into death just after learning that the Negro-Emancipation Act might be considered safe; and, when he closed his eyes, the brightest light of his sect went out. The influence of the body had been materially confirmed by the writings of ^{Of Hannah More.} Hannah More, whose books are a curious reflection of a part of the spirit of her time. The reflection may be regarded as exaggerated, however; for it would be hard to impute to the sect all the spiritual pride and censoriousness, the narrowness of view, and factitious interpretation of nature, life, and Scripture, which pervade her writings. But the solemnity,

the self-analysis, vigilance, asceticism, and intemperance of both fear and hope, are thoroughly characteristic of the sect, and merely aggravated in Hannah More, as they were neutralized in Wilberforce, by the constitution of the individual. Her writings had a vast circulation in their day; and, as they sprang from the spirit which originated the present Evangelical movement, so they largely assisted in kindling and spreading it.

The activity of the sect was shown during this period chiefly in its own walk, — of denunciation, and obstructive asceticism. It does not appear to have taken any conspicuous part either with or against the government on the questions of the time regarding the rights, liabilities, and duties of the Church. But it begged for ordinances of religious humiliation under the infliction of the cholera; in some places held up the cholera as a judgment on the nation for its spiritual levity; instituted the Sabbatarian movement, which has been revived, from time to time, to this day; obstructed the publication of geological knowledge, lest Scripture should be discredited by the disagreement of the beginning of Genesis with the discoveries of modern science; and discountenanced the musical festivals which were a feature of the time, including, as they did, sacred music, and being frequently held in churches. While the Oxford sect were encouraging art, promoting freedom and gaiety of spirits in the intervals of religious observance, — as on Sunday evenings, — and holding that none but the priesthood have any concern with consequences while they scrupulously fulfil conditions, the sons of the Cambridge movement were acting in a curiously opposite manner. A Sabbatarian Bill, full of insufferable and impracticable provisions, was called for once a year, by aristocratic gentlemen who could not suffer under it, while bringing it to bear upon the poor in their comfortless homes, or to prevent their going abroad; a bishop employed himself in invidiously counting the boats which passed under Putney Bridge on the Sunday; dissension was risked, at the early meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, by clergymen who declared themselves resolved to defend the Mosaic Scriptures from the inroads of scientific innovation; and certain newspapers praised the conduct of divines, — and, among others, the Bishop of London, — for withdrawing from all appearance of countenancing the musical festival held in Westminster Abbey in 1834.¹ The scruple was about “employing a church as a place of sensual recreation;” and the doubt was presently extended to the use of music at all in religious worship. These differences between the two sects were practical assertions of their respective doctrines of priesthood and no priesthood, the insufficiency and the suffi-

¹ Standard, July, 1834.

ciency of Scripture, and the ritual and ascetic modes of life and worship.

The action of the third party in the Church during this period is no less conspicuous than that of the first, and far more so than that of the second. This, the Moderate Church party, was that to which the Ministry, and, on the whole, Parliament, may be said to belong; if they could, with their diversity of view and unfixedness of theory, be said to belong to any one division. Ministers of State, and members of Parliament, generally speaking, have not the training — that of the clergy on the one hand, and of the nonconformists on the other — which furnishes men with fixed principles of judgment and action on Church matters; and there is therefore no subject on which legislators usually appear so weak. The surest indication of their views given by ministers was by their clerical appointments; and the appointments under Lord Grey's Administration — especially that of Dr. Whateley to the archbishopric of Dublin — spoke plainly enough. Amidst their infirmity of action, and backwardness of speech, they showed their conviction that the Establishment needed reform; they made a large reduction of Irish bishoprics, consented to a large reduction of Irish tithe, — though the measure was not carried, — and proposed to commute church-rates in England, for the relief of the consciences of Dissenters. The Dissenters refused to accept any thing short of a total abolition of these rates, seeing no relief to conscience, and no recognition of its rights, in a measure which would compel them to pay the same tax under another name; but the proposition showed the tendencies of ministers. Another decisive act of the same character was their favoring the petitions sent in, whether by Dissenters or members of the university, for the admission of Dissenters to degrees in the university. ^{Opening of Universities to Dissenters.} The exclusion of Dissenters, by their being required to sign the thirty-nine articles, was an innovation, — declared to be so by the petitioners in the senate of the University of Cambridge, — and a very injurious one to the interests of all parties. The restrictions were laid on in the reign of James I., in a manner informal and unprecedented, against the wishes of a large number of the then existing members, and in a time of extraordinary turbulence and spiritual oppression. The academical petitioners prayed for a restitution of their ancient laws and liberal usages, whereby many excellent citizens, now excluded by conscience from entering the universities, might be admitted to degrees, and thus made more available to the good of their country. When Lord Grey presented this petition in the Upper House, and Mr. Spring Rice in the Lower, both these ministers pledged themselves to use every effort in their individual capaci-

ties to carry the measure of relief proposed. Counter-petitions were sent in from both universities, much more numerous signed; and their advocates in the House and elsewhere appeared to think the question decided in equity by the preponderance of opinion within the universities; but the government and the Houses generally thought that the opinions of Parliament, the Dissenters themselves, and the public at large, were no less pertinent than those of the privileged university men; and the debate was long and ardent. The case of the exclusionists was destroyed by the existing Cambridge practice of admitting Dissenters to every thing but the honors. They might enter and study, and be on an equal footing with Churchmen till their twelfth term, when the demand upon them to sign the articles barred them from degrees. This was strongly presented by Mr. Spring Rice, in the debate on the Dissenters' Bill; while others showed how fearful was the snare to consciences in such a case, — how powerful a temptation was presented to a young man to sign what he did not believe, — and how injurious it was to the universities themselves, and to public rectitude, to enforce regulations which, in common with all religious tests, keep out the most valuable men, — the conscientious, — and let in the unscrupulous. On the other side, there was some ridicule of Dissenters for "feeling so deeply exclusion from the empty honor of a degree," and apprehension, that, if admitted to that, they would next crave possession of office and emolument in the universities: they were too small a minority to be worth altering the plans of the institutions for; yet they were so numerous, and increasing so fast, that they would soon overthrow the Church: the subscription to articles was a mere form which no reasonable man need scruple to go through; yet it was the bulwark of the Church, which must not be touched: the Dissenters would carry off so few prizes in life, compared with Churchmen, that it was folly to suppose they lost any thing worth debating about by the present arrangement; yet there was no saying what would become of the connection between Church and State, if the liberal professions were thrown open as freely to nonconformists as to members of the Church. Amidst these mutually destructive pleas, the ministers declared their judgment to be in favor of recurrence to the ancient liberties of the universities, and deprecated all argument from possible future consequences, not contemplated in the present measures, and which might very well be met in their own time, if they should ever arise. The scene at the third reading of the Bill was disgracefully clamorous, so that the Speaker himself was scarcely able to preserve his equanimity. The mover of the measure, Mr. Wood, could not be heard in his concluding explanations for the "jeering, shouting,

coughing, and crowing ;” yet he obtained a majority of 164 against 75,—a proof that ministers had on this occasion, and in that House, asserted liberal principles with sufficient plainness. Nor did they fail in the other House ; though there the Bill was thrown out by a majority of 187 to 85.

The apprehension in this case was, that the Dissenters would endeavor to obtain a separation of the Church from the State. The promoters of Mr. Wood’s Bill saw that to refuse what appeared to them justice to the Dissenters was more dangerous to the Church than any recognition of liberty of conscience. The Church really was at that time in great danger. The High Churchmen and Dissenters were almost equally in danger. discontented at its connection with the State ; and the intermediate parties were dissatisfied with its condition, and alarmed at its prospects. “The Church as it now stands,” wrote Dr. Arnold in 1832, “no human power can save.” He and other Moderate Churchmen, therefore, set to work to reform it, while the High Churchmen were proposing its being put under the care of its hierarchy, and the government were striving to disarm the enmity of the Dissenters,—as far as they considered that enmity reasonable,—and the Dissenters were striving for relief from the liability to support a Church of which they conscientiously disapproved.

Among the proposals offered by Churchmen for a reform of the Establishment at that time, the two most conspicuous publications were put forth by Lord Henley and Dr. Arnold. Lord Henley’s plan was, that ecclesiastical affairs should be managed by a convocation ; that the bishops should cease to sit in Parliament ; and that laymen should be wholly silent about matters of Church doctrine. This was so contrary to all Dr. Arnold’s views of right, that it called forth his protest in the shape of a pamphlet on Church reform, which, in that season of excitement, caused much and angry controversy. “I have one great principle which I never lose sight of,” wrote Dr. Arnold,¹—“to insist strongly on the difference between Christian and non-Christian, and to sink into nothing the differences between Christian and Christian.” As he proceeds to say, all the world quarrelled with the one half of his principle or the other ; but he succeeded in impressing his view at least upon the notice of society, if not upon its convictions. And so he did with regard to a truth, so obvious that it is difficult now to believe how lately society in general was blind to it,—that the Church means, not the priesthood, but the body of believers. In every possible way he reiterated this,—insisting that Christianity recognized no priesthood,—that the whole body

¹ Life of Arnold, i. p. 381.

of believers were equally brethren, and the clergy no more than brethren,—till the truth took firm hold of the public mind, and the Tractarian party regarded Dr. Arnold as an impious leveller, and persecuted him for years with the moral weapons which alone the advancement of intelligence has left in the power of the bigot. “Nothing, as it seems to me,” wrote Dr. Arnold,¹ after issuing his plan, “can save the Church but a union with the Dissenters.” Under the conviction of extreme danger to the Establishment, and of the calamity which its overthrow would be to the whole of society, he proposed changes, which, as he afterwards said, ought to be considered in connection with the alarms of the time, as well as on their own merits,—by which, however, he was prepared to abide. After offering an earnest defence of the Establishment, and a statement of its dangers, he proposed, as the only safeguard, the admission of Dissenters within its pale, an accommodation of hours, and throwing-open of churches, which would enable all to worship conscientiously under the shelter of the general Church; and such an alteration of the ordinary services as should admit of their being joined in by a large number of Dissenters whose differences with the Church were not radical. He not only defended the presence of the bishops in Parliament, but desired in every practicable way to amalgamate religious and secular interests. While doing his utmost for the Church and people whom he loved, he had, however, little hope, from the injustice and insolence with which he saw the Dissenters treated by so-called advocates of the Church, and from the keenness with which, as he observed, the Dissenters understood and felt their principles and their position. “If you see my pamphlet and postscript,” he wrote, “you will see that I have kept clear of the mere secular questions of tithes and pluralities, and have argued for a comprehension on higher grounds.² . . . But I fear that our reforms, instead of laboring to unite the Dissenters with the Church, will confirm their separate existence, by relieving them from all which they now complain of as a burden. And, continuing distinct from the Church, will they not labor to effect its overthrow, till they bring us quite to the American platform?”

What answer were the Dissenters giving to this question? The plain answer was, that every thing depended on what was meant in this case by overthrowing the Church. If the Church was taken in Dr. Arnold’s own comprehensive sense of the great body of believers, or in the more limited sense of a body of believers in any particular form of doctrine, neither the Dissenters nor any one else wished to overthrow, or in any way to interfere with, such a Church. But if

Principles
of Church
reform.

The Dissent-
ers.

¹ Life of Arnold, i. p. 339.

² Life of Arnold, i. p. 352.

the meaning was an establishment which compelled its own support from those who disapproved of its doctrine and structure, it was certainly true, throughout that period, that a multitude of the Dissenters did desire the overthrow of the taxing and excluding power. Without concerning themselves about other people's belief and management of their own concerns, many of the Dissenters did exert themselves vigorously to obtain relief of conscience for themselves. Some helped to throw out Lord Althorp's measure for the commutation of church-rates, on the ground that it was not the amount of tax that they complained of, but the obligation to support a religious institution of which they disapproved. Several went to prison, during these and succeeding years, and lay there long, rather than pay a few shillings of church-rate. Many petitioned Parliament for the removal of the bishops from the legislature. Many demanded admission to the universities. Many agitated for a dissolution of the union between Church and State. And the body generally gave their support to the propositions of the ministers to reduce the Irish Church, to review the resources of the Church in England, to extinguish tithes, and to abolish pluralities.

Some curious incidents are found scattered through the registers of these years, which show the temper of the times, amidst the convulsion of religious parties. The work called "Froude's Remains" opens to the reader an astonishing picture of the state of mind and mode of life of the early Tractarians, — with their talk of the "detestable Reformation," "odious Protestantism," the insufficiency of Scripture, and its utter destitution of assertion and evidence of the chief essential doctrines of the Christian faith; and their fastings, forms, and strong tendency to monachism. An analysis and comparison of their principles and modes of belief, their forms and organization, present so curious and minute a resemblance to those of the Pharisees, as exhibited favorably by Josephus the Pharisee, as to make it astonishing that the parallelism could be overlooked by the members of the new sect themselves. From their great doctrines of the insufficiency of Scripture, the need of tradition, and priestly succession, to their daily religious forms, the resemblance is astonishing.

Next we come to several occasions of great amazement to members of the Administration. Lord Althorp found himself worsted in an unexpected collision with refractory churchwardens, when he issued a circular to that body in England and Wales, preparatory to the institution of the ecclesiastical commission. The circular requested information as to the amount, ownership, and liabilities of church property in their respective parishes. Some took no notice, some declined giving

Government
circular.

any information, and some wrote in a tone of which the following extract may serve as a specimen. It occurs in the midst of a lecture to the Minister on the coronation oath, the sacredness of church property, and so forth: "It is the part of wise legislators to obtain the most accurate and authentic information, before they attempt to make enactments touching the property and vital interests of millions. Not so with the Administration in which your Lordship holds a prominent office: they pre-judge a case,—administer to the passions and vices of the mob, to obtain their concurrence and support,—act in ignorance,—and mar every thing that they pretend to mend.¹ Nor are we satisfied that you and your colleagues have any more right to meddle with, so as to deteriorate, the property belonging to any clergyman, or any corporate body of the clergy, than the highwayman has to take your purse." We are here furnished with proof that liberty of speech was unrestricted in Great Britain in 1834.

Next, we find Lord Grey, now old enough to be astonished at nothing, wholly taken by surprise by popular rebukes of his countenance of pluralities. He presented to the deanery of Down a clergyman who already held a living of 1200*l.* a year, and gave as his reason, by the mouth of the Irish Secretary, that "it was not too much that such preferment should be bestowed on a son of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland."² So open an avowal of church preferment following on political connection, was caught up with the eagerness to be expected at such a season of crisis; and so was the explanation, which the Premier found himself obliged to authorize, of the circumstances under which he had given a stall at Westminster to his relative the Bishop of Hereford.³ Amazed as he was at the censure incurred by acts till now so little liable to question, the fact was so, and he had only to acquiesce in it; as had Lord Althorp, in the Dissenters being offended instead of gratified by his proposed church-rate measure. The most striking scene of this class, however, appears to have been an interview between the Prime Minister and a deputation of Nottingham Dissenters.⁴ When these delegates presented their memorial, Lord Grey supposed that its contents were the same with those of other memorials from Dissenters; to which Mr. Howitt's reply was, that the paper itself would explain that better than he could, as the memorial proceeded from persons whose object was to express their own wishes, and not to look about to see what others were doing. They had prayed for the separation of Church and State. Lord Grey, who seems throughout this crisis to have been blind

¹ Spectator, 1834, p. 35.

² Hansard, xxiii. p. 599.

³ England's Seven Administrations, ii. p. 377.

⁴ Annual Register, 1834, Chron. p. 7.

to the safety of perfect openness, to have always supposed that people meant more than they said, and to have approved of that method of proceeding, declared that he was sorry, that ministers would be embarrassed, and Parliament alarmed. He could not see what more Dissenters could wish than relief from disabilities as to marriage, burial, registration, and such matters. The deputation replied, that their brethren had thought it best not to stop short of the broad ground of religious liberty. Still Lord Grey was perplexed, for he did not understand the principles of religious liberty. He asked if they wanted to do away with all state establishments of religion; to which Mr. Howitt's reply was, "Precisely: that was what they desired." He explained, that, in the opinion of the body he represented, a Christian government should protect Christianity; but that this could be done only by making all bodies of Christians equal before the law. Lord Grey indicated unconsciously the spirit and the fault of his government, by setting forth what he believed it would have been politic for the petitioners to have asked; and that the gaining of that step might have led to something more. The views of the petitioners, however, were not politic, but moral; and they were not a party whose obligations and conscience the Prime Minister was likely to be able to expound. The simple reply of the deputation conveyed a severe rebuke. They did not think it honest to ask for less than they desired to have, with a concealed view of obtaining more hereafter. Where a principle was concerned, they thought it right to make a plain and full assertion of it. In this course there was nothing disingenuous; and it left no ground for future discontent and misunderstanding. It might have been happy for the Whig Administration if it had been early familiarized with the broad principle of religious liberty, and, yet more, with the spectacle of a calm and intrepid assertion of any principle in its full scope.

It may be remembered, that, at a former period, one objection to the admission of Jews to Parliament was, that Quakers were excluded; to which the advocates of Admission of Quakers to Parliament. the Jews replied, that they were quite ready to admit the Quakers. This was now done.¹ Early in the session of 1833, Mr. Pease, member for Darlington, presented himself at the table, and claimed to make affirmation, instead of taking the oaths. He was ordered to withdraw, on his refusal to take the oaths; and a committee was appointed to consider of his case. The result was, that the House, on the recommendation of Mr. Wynn, the chairman of the committee, resolved to admit Mr. Pease; conceiving that if he became, by his entrance, liable to penalties in any courts, the risk was his own, and no

¹ Hansard, xv. pp. 387, 645.

concern of theirs. The ayes were loud and multitudinous, and there were no nays; and when the Quaker member appeared to make his affirmation, clothed in a complete suit of brown, elegant from its extreme neatness, he was received with a very cordial and general cheering. If one of the objections to the admission of Jews was thus done away, they did not at present profit by it. Their cause was annually pleaded by some Christians, as unquestionably and earnestly religious as any in the House; but the same mutually contradictory arguments for their exclusion were also repeated from year to year; and the religious conflicts of the time yielded no increase of civil rights to them.

And, during these conflicts in the Church, and between its members and the Dissenters, Death was putting in his cold hand to draw away one and another of the assertors of full religious liberty, to a region of utter stillness. Where angry voices were now clamoring, their loved tones would never more charm to silence the strife of tongues; where eyes were flashing in enthusiasm or passion, or congregations were met calmly to assert their rights of conscience, some gray-haired leaders were absent, and would never meet their brethren again. The Death of Robert Hall. Baptists had lost Robert Hall; or, rather, the world had lost him. From him Sir J. Mackintosh said that he had learned more of principles than from all the books he had ever read; and, while he could thus meet the strongest men on their own ground, he could charm the most ignorant, and rouse the most apathetic, by the light and glory which streamed from the fountain of the heart in floods of eloquence, which it required only an open heart to receive. This great man's life was one of fearful suffering from disease,—from anguish of body, which, at one period, helped to overthrow his mind, and which, ever after his recovery from that insanity, kept him apparently too low and weak for duty. But duty was his strength; and in him was seen, from week to week, that marvel which has often attended a briefer martyrdom,—that of the extinction of the sense of pain under the strong workings of the nobler powers. When he feebly entered the pulpit, and rose feebly to speak, and spoke at first in a voice so low and husky as to make his hearers wish him at home and at rest, it was scarcely possible to believe him the Robert Hall whose vigorous championship of the rights of conscience, and broad assertion of a liberal philosophy, were before the world; but from moment to moment the fire was kindling and spreading within him,—his torment subsided, his eye brightened, his voice grew strong and sweet,—he was in heaven for the time, and carried his hearers a long way on towards it too. Amidst the conflicts of Christian faiths at this

time, he disappeared; and the voice which, the more it roused souls, spread the more a deepening calm, would never again rebuke the strife of sects, and recommend to them, as he loved to do, "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Another was withdrawn, too, of whom no one knew whether he ^{Of Rowland} ought to be called Churchman or Dissenter. Rowland ^{Hill.}

Hill had received deacon's orders, and always insisted that he was an Episcopalian clergyman; but he preached any and every where, — in all sorts of chapels, in private rooms, under trees in parks, and in the open fields. His mission was — or seemed to himself to be — to find fault all round, except with persons too obscure to fix the eyes of men. He was the foe of John Wesley in early life, and afterwards the censor of all churches, — having as vehement an intolerance of sectarianism as sects in his latter days had of each other. When the white hairs of fourscore years hung beside his brows, his rebukes had another power added to that of his strong and apt and piercing thought; and, aged as he was, he was missed at a time of conflict, when he would have proved himself almost as powerful in shaming men out of their religious contentions as Robert Hall in elevating them above them. His organist, Charles Wesley, whose devout ^{Of Charles} soul found utterance in music, was wont to soothe the ^{Wesley.}

troubled and abashed hearers of the eccentric pastor by divine strains, which were only in true harmony, however, with the prayers of the old divine; and now, the pastor being gone, the harmonist soon followed, — wafted away, it might almost be said, in music. During the wanderings of his last illness, he scarcely ceased his low singing of the airs of Handel. With him departed one more tranquillizing and sanctifying influence from the religious world of the period. From four years old, when his music drew tears down the cheeks of listeners, to the age of seventy-six, he was a living harp, made resonant by every breath of thought, incident, and feeling; and a sad silence settled down upon his place when death had snapped the chords at last. The

learned Adam Clarke died during the fierceness of the ^{Of Adam} sectarian conflict. In his youth, he had known and ^{Clarke.}

witnessed more of religious excitement than most men; for, when only nineteen, he was one of Wesley's itinerant preachers. The quietness of the study suited him better, however; and he withdrew more and more into it, — delighting himself with various antiquarian research, but devoting his best resources of every kind to his great commentary on the Bible. He educated two Buddhist priests for the function of Christian missionaries in Ceylon, and baptized them; but that part of his work afterwards appeared to himself fruitless, for they became high-priests in their own temples at home. He was immersed in his biblical

studies in his last days; and we may hope that the clamors of theological strife came softened to him in his retreat, and gave as little disturbance to his peace as to his faith; but his very quietness was an admonition which could ill be spared at such a time. One other there was, whose departure at this juncture can never be alluded to without clouding the countenances of all who knew his story. Rammohun Roy was the descendant of Brahmins of a high order. He was born a British subject in India; and he used all the opportunity given him by birth and position for cultivating his mind, and enlarging his knowledge. He became a Christian, and gloried — till he came to England — in the liberty and liberality secured, as he believed, by that faith. He learned the languages necessary for studying the Scriptures in the original; and from them he directly derived his views of the comprehension, charity, and fundamental liberty of the Christian religion. He arrived in England in 1831, to watch over the reconstruction of the India-Company's charter. The impressible Hindoo was sufficiently excited by the merely political movements of the time; but its religious conflicts affected him much more deeply. He could not recognize the Christianity he had learned and so dearly loved amidst the pretension of the Tractarians, and the asceticism of the Evangelicals, and the wrath of the Irish Protestants, and the tumult of the Irish Catholics, and the conflicts between the Church and the Dissenters, and the widening split in the Scotch Church, and the profane antics of the Irvingites. He went to hear all within his reach; he was ready with sympathy for all who were not angry or proud; he poured out his wonder and sorrow at what he saw; and — he wasted, day by day. Other causes of trouble he is believed to have had; but it was the painful excitement of his sojourn in England that was fatal to him. A sickly hue — not concealed by the dark skin — settled upon his cheek; the hair round the turban, once so crisp, became thin and lank; the long fingers grew thinner and thinner; the cheerful voice grew listless and hoarse; the light of the eye went out; the tall frame was bent; and an expression of ghastliness gathered about the once mobile and smiling mouth. He sank at the first touch of illness, resigning himself to the Hindoo observances desired by his attendants, and was laid, — not among any of the Christians whose strifes had so chilled and wounded his hope and heart, — but alone, among the trees of a private garden belonging to the mansion where he died. It is not in our time, as it once was, that the heathen say, as they look thoughtfully on, "See how these Christians love one another!" Rammohun Roy found the religious world in England very far, indeed, from even the view of one of her own

Churchmen, — “to insist strongly on the difference between Christian and non-Christian, and to sink into nothing the differences between Christian and Christian.”

The prevalent faith in Ireland lost a champion at this time in the death of the Roman-Catholic Bishop Doyle.

And, in Scotland, the schism was begun, which was to end in the secession of the Free Church from the Establishment.¹

In 1834, the General Assembly, whose constitution had been much modified by the operation of the Scotch Borough-Reform

Bill, passed a law which interfered considerably with the function of patronage, increasing the difficulty to any patron of settling a minister who should be unacceptable to a congregation. Bodies of Churchmen had already

Schism
in Scotch
Church.

seceded, and formed themselves into “Voluntary Church Associations,” many Dissenters joining them; and now many more Dissenters sided with the Church, on the passage of the Act restraining the powers of patrons, — which powers had been the most important original cause of dissent in Scotland. A fierce storm was evidently driving up; and we shall hereafter have to watch its explosion.

Amidst such turbulence, there must be eccentricity. The intellectually and morally infirm become excited in noisy times, and cannot be kept quiet. Irving and his fantastical

Irving.

worship have been mentioned before, as a natural product of such a crisis; and now came the close of that tragedy, — a tragedy which, like so many others, involved with its mournfulness much of the horrible and of the ludicrous. Canning had been one of his hearers. On Sir J. Mackintosh mentioning a prayer of Irving's,² — “We pray for those orphans who have been deprived of their parents, and are now thrown on the fatherhood of God,” — Canning “started” at the beauty of the expression, and made Sir J. Mackintosh take him to the Scotch Church the next Sunday. There was then no one of any kind of eminence who did not go to swell the crowd at the Scotch Church. But such fashions do not last. As soon as the social and sympathetic nature of the man was roused, and his love of sympathy and approbation kindled to an irrepressible flame, “fashion went her idle way,” as Carlyle says, “to gaze on Egyptian crocodiles, Iroquois hunters, or what else there might be; forgot this man, — who unhappily could not in his turn forget. . . . There was now the impossibility to live neglected; to walk on the quiet paths, where alone it is well with us. Singularity must henceforth succeed singularity.” By the time his church was ready, his fame had greatly sunk; and even the exhibition of the unknown tongues brought few strangers. There can be no doubt that

¹ Annual Register, 1834, p. 220.

² Life of Mackintosh, ii. p. 478.

some of his own flock, and a few more, were sincere believers in the gift of tongues; that of those who sat in that church in the gray of the wintry morning, listening for the shrill, unearthly sound from the lips of the "gifted," many believed that the end of the world was at hand; as, indeed, did some who were not usually superstitious. But Irving felt himself, for the last seven years of his life, neglected; and to him to be neglected was to be forlorn. He could not acquiesce; and he wore himself out in the effort to keep up incessant excitement in himself and his sect, and to draw in towards himself notice, wonder, and sympathy from without. On the 2d of May, 1832, he was excluded from the Scotch Church, on the ground of heresy. It was after this that he betook himself to the little chapel in Newman Street, where the worst exhibitions of eccentricity took place. Through all these, he was believed by Dr. Chalmers "to be a man of deep and devoted piety." We have seen what he was as "the blooming young man."¹ "The last time I saw him," says the same recorder, "was three months ago, in London. Friendliness still beamed in his eyes, but now from amidst unquiet fire; his face was flaccid, wasted, unsound; hoary as with extreme age; he was trembling over the brink of the grave."

His death. His last words were: "In life and death I am the Lord's." He was in his forty-third year. The body of his followers did not immediately melt away, and the name of an Irvingite may still be heard here and there; but there was no distinctive doctrine to hold them together,—scarcely a bond but that of belief in Irving and the tongues; and the sect stands on record chiefly as an eccentricity,—as a rebuke of the intemperance of the time.

In such a period, it is not wonderful, that some, sickened with the apparent fruitlessness of the religion of unity, peace, and charity, should turn towards a profession which combined social with religious objects, and should become eccentric in their turn.

St. Simonism. The system called St. Simonism was preached in England in 1832, offering a new law of love and human equality, in the place of that Christian one which it assumed, from existing appearances, to have failed. Attempts were made to laugh it down; but the strife of the Christian world gave it a weight which could not be got rid of by mere scorn; and many listened, with new hope and a long-forgotten cheer, to the preaching of the golden rule of this new faith,—that every one should be employed according to his capacity, and rewarded according to his works. Society was to be ruled by persons of genius and virtue; and, under them, all were to have a fair start,—to be allowed the free use of their best

¹ Carlyle's *Miscellanies*, iv. p. 83.

powers, and reap their natural reward. The spiritual, intellectual, and industrial concerns of each and all were to be combined in a closer union than ever before; and thus work was to be worship, and affectionate co-operation was to be piety. Amidst much that interested some of the best hearts, and engaged some of the noblest minds of the time, there were doctrines and provisions that would not stand a close examination. While it was supposed that the rulers would be persons of virtue and genius, the proposed organization offered a scheme of a hierarchy which might easily, and would probably, become an intolerable despotism, — a locked framework, in which individual freedom might become impossible. Still, from the nobleness of its social rule, from its union of religious appeal with social sympathy, and from the humbling and embarrassing condition of the religious world at the time, the disciples of St. Simon were not few in England, and their quality was of no mean order. At meetings in London, the French chief of the St. Simonian Church in London presided, in the costume of the sect, and told, by the lips of English friends, the story of its propagandism; for its missionaries were abroad, from Constantinople to the Mississippi.¹ Among the speakers stands the name of the virtuous Rowland Detrosier, the chairman of the Manchester Political Union, — as an inquirer and assistant, not an advocate; and it may be noted among the signs of the times, that a system of communism, elevated, just, and spiritualized enough to engage the inquiring sympathy of men of his class, should then, amidst the haughty claims of the churches, obtain any footing in England. Rowland Detrosier died the next year, “directing his remains to be devoted to the purposes of science;” and St. Simonism did not long survive him. There may be wardrobes where the dress of the sect is laid by in lavender, and now and then wistfully looked at; there may be times when families and friends revert to the golden rule of labor and its recompense, and speculate on when it will come into practice; but St. Simonism has long taken its place among the religious and social eccentricities of its day.

The most evident practical result of the religious conflicts of the period was the quickening of the purposes of the government to get out the ecclesiastical commission which was to inquire into the condition of the Church in England, and redistribute its temporalities. This commission was set to work in 1835. As for the rest, it may be hoped that a multitude remembered at the time, as we do now, that noise and confusion are in their very nature superficial and fitful. Turbulence is on the surface; calmness is within the depths. Christianity in England was far from being like what this

Proposed
ecclesiastical
commission.

¹ Annual Register, 1833, Chron. p. 153.

narrative of critical phenomena, taken alone, would represent it. For every conspicuous personage who was announcing or denouncing, or remonstrating or propounding, or anathematizing or demanding, there were hundreds or thousands of quiet Christians at home, humbly living by their light, and religiously following peace with all men. Because the faith was, visibly, before the eyes of all men, corrupted in high places, it was not necessarily spoiled to the multitude who dwelt below. To the thousands who sat on the grass in the wilderness of life, Christ might be breaking bread, while his handful of preachers and witnesses were contending which should be greatest. If it was scarcely possible at the moment for all to help visiting some of the pain and shame of such contentions on the religion which was their ostensible theme, it would be folly and ignorance for us to do so now. The controversialists and brawlers of the time were not the British nation; and those to whom the Christian religion was dear as glad tidings of peace and good-will, lived in that sunshine, and only wondered at the far-off blackness and tempest which did not overcloud their sky.

CHAPTER XI.

IF the unreasonable expectations of the country were a hardship upon the Whig Administration generally, there was no particular in which such expectations were more perplexing than that of finance. The nation ought to have known that this was a point on which the Whigs must be weak — in practice, if not in conception. There is, perhaps, no office of the government so difficult to fill well as that of Chancellor of the Exchequer; and certainly none in regard to which it is so impossible to anticipate correctly whether any man will fill it well or ill. He may have gone through all the preparatory offices, and be deservedly looked up to for all the qualities which all these offices can elicit; and yet, when he takes the one other step, he, for his part, may find himself in a wholly new world, for which his previous training may have done little to fit him, and everybody else may find him a very bad Chancellor of the Exchequer. The only certain point about the matter is, that a man who has had no training, and who is moreover a novice in executing politics altogether, cannot fill the office well. This was Lord Althorp's constant plea, — urged even pathetically. He was wont to say that he was forced into the office against his will; he was wont to solicit information, as an alms, on every hand; he entreated every one to observe the tentative character of his proposals, and to believe that he was quite ready to give them up; and he conveyed the impression, every time he opened any financial subject, that he supposed the chances to be against his information being correct, and his plans feasible. Yet, with all this candor on his part, the people were slow to learn the incapacity of Whig administrations in matters of finance. When the sayings of the Whigs in opposition were remembered, — their complaints of heavy taxation, their demands of reform, their criticisms on financial measures, — the multitude, including whole classes who ought to have known better, looked for a large immediate reduction of taxation, — a prodigious lightening of the national burdens, — as soon as a liberal Minister should take the national accounts in hand. At the end of their first term, when Lord Grey went out of office, there was some-

thing ludicrous as well as humbling in looking back to see what had been done. The ministers and their friends complained of factious opposition in Parliament, and of faithlessness and impertinence in their underlings: complaints which were a mere confession of weakness; for the Duke of Wellington's government had practically shown their willingness to reduce the national burdens; and there was no party, in or out of Parliament, which was not ready for as much financial reform as the Whig government was able to conceive of: and, as for the underlings, this was a sort of business which it was not in their power to obstruct, if it had been pursued on any broad and clear principle, such as Parliament and the country were able to understand and to sustain. But there was no principle in the case, nor the remotest conception of any; while there was a wholly gratuitous violation of principles, as Lord Althorp himself avowed, on the very first occasion of producing his budget.

At the outset of his explanations, the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that the government adopted the principles and views of Sir Henry Parnell, in his work on financial reform; a declaration which the author, who was present, would naturally wish unmade, when he heard, year after year, Lord Althorp's recommendations of his budget.

The subject was opened on the 11th of February, 1831, when it was yet too early for much more than a declaration of intentions. Lord Althorp referred to the national expectation of great reductions of abuse and expense, and said that the government proposed to reduce eventually 210 places under its own appointment.¹ The reduction would for some time be merely of patronage, and not of expense; and of the 210, 71 were officers of the dock-yards, 60 in the Irish post-office, and 46 receivers of taxes in England, whose salaries could not be large; so that the benefit was more in the example than in any immediate relief. The surplus this year would be small, — about 300,000*l.*; an amount which some of the friends of government considered too small to justify any reduction of taxation; but Lord Althorp seems to have considered himself bound to make some immediate changes. He seems to have been unaware, that a mere transposition, such as he proposed, can give little relief, while any disarrangement is in itself an evil requiring relief to compensate for it; and that a partial reduction of several taxes tells far less than a total abolition of a few, because the expenses of collection and management remain, instead of being swept away. In both these points, his scheme was faulty; and Sir Henry Parnell presently took occasion to deny its being formed on his principles. He approved of taking off taxes; but

First budget.

¹ Hansard, ii. p. 404.

there was nothing in his book to sanction laying on new duties when the public service could be provided for without.

There was to be a reduction of the duties on tobacco, on newspapers, stamps, and advertisements, on candles and tallow, and an abolition of duties on sea-borne coal, on printed calicoes, on glass, and on auctions.¹ As a deficiency of above three millions would be thus caused, compensation must be found. For this end, there was to be an equalization of the duties on foreign wines, on Baltic and Canada timber, and on large and small coal for export; and several new duties were to be laid on, of which the worst in principle — and admitted by Lord Althorp himself to be so — was that of an increase to 1*d.* per lb. on all raw cotton imported. The taxing of the raw material of manufactures he declared to be an essential mischief, “which, however, the advantages would, he hoped, counterbalance.”² He pleaded its smallness in extenuation of its badness. The other new taxes were on travellers by steamboat, on the transfer of landed property, and on the *bonâ-fide* transfer of property in the funds.

The whole budget was severely treated; but the outcry on this last item was the loudest. Lord Althorp gave it up, and also the steamboat-tax. The duty on the transfer of real property of course went too; and to make up for the cutting-off of these proposed resources, the duties on tobacco and glass must be retained. Thus the greater part of the plan was gone already; and a defeat on the timber-duties question awaited the Minister. He proposed, on the 18th of March, to render the change of duties more gradual, and so involved the fiscal question with the wider one of free-trade, that the opposition required either a committee of inquiry, or time for consideration. Lord Althorp declined both, and was left in a minority of 46.³ The duty on Cape wines was again altered, and the penny cotton-duty was reduced to $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of a penny; and thus scarcely any thing remained of Lord Althorp's first budget.

This compelled him to bring forward the subject again within the year; and October was the time, as Parliament was sitting at that unusual season on account of the Reform Bill. The most remarkable fact in connection with this statement was the result of the reductions in the excise and customs, made by the late government within two years. The estimated reductions had amounted to nearly four millions and a half, while the actual decrease had been little more than two millions and a half, in the last year. Lord Althorp felt confident that he did not make any exaggerated statement when he assured the House that it might rely on a surplus for the year of 493,479*l.* “He had examined the statements in every way that he could, and he was sure that

¹ Hansard, ii. p. 988.

² Hansard, ii. p. 414.

³ Hansard, iii. p. 576.

he was not chargeable with any exaggeration." This was on the 3d of October.¹ On the 17th, the Duke of Wellington gave warning that the ministers would find themselves mistaken in their hopes of half a million of surplus, and declared that the utmost surplus could not exceed 10,000*l.*; but Lord Grey² "could not see on what principle" the statement of Lord Althorp could be disallowed, and was confident that government might have taken credit for a much larger surplus. The event was such as might make the Duke himself as much surprised as the ministers were ashamed.

From the occupation of Parliament and the country with the Reform Bill, it was the 27th of July before Lord Althorp could bring forward his financial statement, though he must long have been wishing the exposure well over. His delightful candor, however, smoothed his way through difficulties which would have been most galling to men less truthful, or more self-seeking. "I am quite aware," said he, "that my statement must be one which a Chancellor of the Exchequer has been unaccustomed to make of late years; and therefore I have to throw myself upon the indulgence of the House."³ The surplus of last autumn had dwindled away, month by month; and, instead of the half-million anticipated, there was now a deficiency of more than 600,000*l.* Under such circumstances, no reduction of the public burdens could be proposed; and the ministers were persuaded, now that they saw things by the lights of office, — which really are essential to a perfect judgment of such matters, — that the vigorous reforms under the late government had carried reduction as far as it could safely go. The present ministers had cut down the estimates to the amount of 2,000,000*l.*, and declared that henceforth any relief to the people must come from economy in the departments to obtain a surplus, and not from reduction of taxes. The unexpected deficiency was ascribed in part to the arrival of the cholera, and to political excitement; but there was also an oversight of Lord Althorp's pointed out by himself: he had forgotten the expiration of the beer-duties in the spring, which made a difference of 350,000*l.*

On the next occasion, he presented his budget for the first time to a reformed Parliament.⁴ This was on the 19th of April, 1833. First, he gave a good account of the reductions of official expenses by Lord Grey's government. They had abolished 1307 places, with an immediate saving of 192,000*l.*, and a prospective one of 38,000*l.* more, on the expiration of the retired allowances; and some saving in such allowances had taken place in another direction, by bringing retired

¹ Hansard, vii. p. 1031.

³ Hansard, xiv. p. 849.

² Hansard, viii. p. 847.

⁴ Hansard, xvii. p. 326-339.

revenue-servants into active duty again, as opportunity offered. Lord Aberdeen's reductions in the diplomatic department, under the late Administration, had been carried on, till they now reached nearly 100,000*l*. There was now a surplus, and one considerable enough to do more than pay off the previous deficiency; and Lord Althorp ascribed this to the reduction in the estimates, and not to any remarkable improvement in the yield of the taxes. It enabled him to offer something in the shape of a boon to the taxpayers; and what he proposed was this, — to abolish the duty on tiles, and the cotton-duty laid on two years before; and to reduce the duty on soap one half, and, in various proportions, the duties on advertisements, and on marine insurance, and several assessed taxes.

It was clear that the ministers had no ideas on the subject of taxation, — no principle, no orderly plan. There was a touch here and a touch there, — now a notice of a little experiment, and again a retraction of it; but nowhere a broad procedure based on sound reasons. The whole management was not only empirical, but desultory. To men who knew any thing of the principles of finance, certain lessons of this year — this first year of a reformed Parliament — would have been painfully impressive; only, that to men who duly felt the responsibilities of government they could not have occurred.

“When I laid the additional duty on raw cotton in 1831,” — there had been an almost inappreciable *ad valorem* duty before, — “I said that it was radically wrong in principle,” Lord Althorp now declared with an unabashed air; “and that, on the first opportunity which arrived, it ought to be reduced.¹ That opportunity has now arrived.” It seems never to have occurred to him, that there was any thing wrong in thus playing fast and loose with such a power of interference as that of taxation, — that there was any objection to laying on a tax one year and taking it off another, deranging the course of manufactures and commerce at each operation. Nor, on any one of the many occasions of his acknowledgment of the vicious principle of the taxes which he imposed or retained, did he show any shame in alleging the most trifling pretences of temporary convenience. Some astonished observers at last came to the conclusion, that there was something behind, — that Lord Althorp himself, the most ingenuous of men, assigned one set of reasons, and acted upon another. And, in truth, there *was* something behind; and it *was* the practice of this Administration, and perhaps its very worst fault, to assign bad reasons for good acts, and insufficient reasons for bad acts.

Some reference has been made before to the fatal practice

¹ Hansard, xvii. p. 336.

of the Whig administrations of yielding to clamor whatever it chose to demand; and, after a time, to yield nothing but what was demanded by clamor. It was pointed out that this really revolutionary system began with the Tories, — with the protracted refusal of the Catholic claims; but it has since become a distinguishing characteristic of what are called liberal administrations. In this particular, in which Lord Grey's Cabinet as a whole was inculpated, Lord Althorp was perhaps the greatest sinner; and a clear publication of the fact was before the world during this and the succeeding session. At a public meeting, at this date, when some proposition about Dissenters' rights was made, the mover was entreated to wait and be patient, and not embarrass the Ministry. "Not embarrass the Ministry!" he cried. "Why, I never found yet that any thing was to be had but by embarrassing the Ministry;" and his closing words were lost amidst vociferous cheering. And, of the whole Administration, it was understood that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the most impressible by clamor, from his good-nature, his indolence, his consciousness of unfitness for his work, and his consequent lack of self-reliance. Accordingly, he became the butt of all discontented tax-payers; and they made him so miserable that he daily sighed to be able either to repeal all taxes whatever, or to hide himself on one of his stock-farms. From the moment he could not but see that the turbulent among the tax-paying multitude had discovered how to manage him, he lost all energy; and the movement against the assessed taxes reached a point which disturbed the peace of the metropolis. And not only of the metropolis; for in several large towns there were threatenings of fiscal rebellion, and everywhere a strong disgust at the ineptitude of the Finance Minister.

In answer to the universal complaints of the injury and inconvenience of our methods of taxation, by which industry was fettered, food made dear, knowledge taxed, incomes rendered uncertain, and tempers tried past endurance, the government thought it enough to say that these things could not be remedied without making "an extensive change in the whole financial system." But this extensive change in the financial system of the country was one of the promises of the Reform Ministry, — one of the labors to which a reformed Parliament was pledged. It was told in the House how astonished an eminent foreigner, M. Simond, was at seeing an exciseman in a glass-house quietly permitted to interfere with the process of manufacture, and how earnestly M. Simond inquired whether the spirit of the English people could really patiently endure such an intrusion. It was asked why the English people should endure such a method of taxation, — why there should not be a complete revision and

Assessed
taxes move-
ment.

reform of our financial system, — why there had not been already such a reform, — why a year had been lost. The discussion of this matter, the pressing of these questions in the House, and, through the newspapers, in the country, became very urgent during this session of 1833; and Lord Althorp had nothing, as yet, to reply, but that he would take off a little here and lay on a little there, and that to do more would be “to make an extensive change in the whole financial system.” Certain classes of tax-payers therefore took the matter into their own hands. A prodigious outcry was raised against the house and window taxes.

These two taxes were always mentioned together by those who desired to get rid of them; but many thought — The house-tax. — that, while the window-tax was one of the worst on the list, the house-duty was one of the best. The window-tax is a duty upon fresh air, sunshine, and health; the house-duty had the merits of being a direct tax, and of falling on a class particularly well able to pay it, — that of proprietors of houses. The truth of the matter was, however, that the tenants of London houses — a numerous class of shopkeepers and others occupying large premises — paid the tax during occupancy, the amount being allowed for in their rent. By obtaining a repeal of the tax, they would pocket its amount during the remainder of their lease; and the event proved that this was motive enough for a noisy agitation. It never was general in the country; it did not spread beyond London and two or three of the large towns; but it was too much for the energy of Lord Althorp. Associations were formed to resist the payment of these taxes; no purchasers came forward for goods seized for arrears of these duties: when the levy was made, it was necessary to bring out, not only a large force of police, but of soldiery; and these were got rid of by terrified lodgers or friends of the recusants handing the money out of upper windows. Long and noisy processions of London tenants — chiefly shopkeepers of the west end — came to besiege the treasury-chambers; and, for some hours, it was difficult for horse or foot passengers to make their way between Parliament Street and Charing Cross. Lord Althorp was earnestly assured by those who understood the parties, — and he declared that he believed it himself, — that the outcry was only tentative, and the discontent partial and selfish; yet he gave way, as will be presently seen. “What taxes would you reduce, if you were in my place?” he asked of an adviser. “Certainly not the house-duty, — that is nearly the best tax we have,” was the reply. “It is,” he said, — “it is a good tax; yet you would yield if you had been in Whitehall yesterday, and had heard the clamor that I

had to hear."—"It is only the west-end shopkeepers, who want to pocket a bonus."—"I know it; but what can I do?" This was early in 1834; and it was only in the preceding May that the Chancellor had obtained the sanction of Parliament to the continuance of the house and window taxes by a majority of 273 to 124.¹ On the 21st of next February, he incurred the banter of Sir Robert Peel, by his change of tone on this question. He was rather disposed to remit the house-tax, though he believed that it was not the best that he could remit. He could have put down the resistance to the tax; yet the resistance was partly the reason of his giving up the point. "He would leave the matter open for a certain period, so that each member might present his plan to the House; and if any honorable gentleman should succeed in inducing the House to prefer any other tax for remission, he would not propose to repeal the house-tax."² This was a direct invitation to clamor against every tax on the list. "The noble lord," said Sir Robert Peel, "was the last person to object to this gentle violence. There never was so clear an invitation to be ravished. . . . He would, for six months, give a clear stage and no favor to all those who were anxious to make him change his course." After this, it was no matter of wonder that the house-tax figured at the head of the reductions proposed, when the budget was brought forward, in the next July. "The first, ^{Statement of 1834.} and by much the largest," said Lord Althorp, "was that reduction, which he had already proposed, of the house-tax, amounting to 1,200,000*l*." The window-tax was at the same time slightly reduced, at a cost of 35,000*l*.—the relief being given to small farmhouses.

The excitements of the times in relation to these duties, and the difficulties of Ministers, were increased by the necessity of a Westminster election, on account of them. Sir J. C. Hobhouse, one of the representatives of Westminster, and Secretary for Ireland, had repeatedly condemned these taxes in his addresses to his constituents, and in his speeches in Parliament. When Lord Althorp began to waver, Sir J. C. Hobhouse absented himself from divisions; and, after doing so on the 30th of April, was called to account by his constituents, and resigned both his office and his seat. He presented himself again for Westminster, but was thrown out; and the election was conducted with a violence, and an enmity towards the government, which showed how far it was possible to sink in popularity in one year, by a timid or indolent omission to redeem pledges of financial reform given in days of struggle and hope.³ There is no doubt that this Westminster election determined

¹ Hansard, xviii. p. 32.

² Hansard, xxi. p. 690.

³ Annual Register, 1833, Chron. p. 78.

much of the character of the next year's budget, though the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not qualified, as he himself declared, to redeem the promises of the government, by proposing a large measure of financial reform.

If the Administration showed itself irresolute and imperfectly informed, it was not the House of Commons that had at this time any right to offer ridicule or reproach. On the 26th of April, 1833, a reduction of the malt-tax was proposed by Sir William Ingilby, — a reduction amounting ^{The malt-tax.} to at least as much as the relief proposed from the repeal of the house-duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer remonstrated, declaring that such a reduction would compel the imposition of a property-tax. The House decided in its favor, however, by a majority of ten; and the ministers found themselves in a difficulty under which they must have time for deliberation. The only declaration made on the instant by Lord Althorp was, that he should be ashamed not to acquiesce in the expressed decision of the House. On consideration, however, it did not appear necessary so to acquiesce; and it was resolved in the Cabinet to induce the Commons to rescind their vote. Lord Althorp tendered his resignation the morning after being outvoted on Sir William Ingilby's motion; but Lord Grey advised the King not to receive it. The country gentlemen were by some means made to understand, that any reduction of taxation begun by them would be taken out of their hands by the manufacturing interest, with more vigor than any other party could command. Lord Althorp was persuaded that he did not stand pledged to abide by the decision of the House, as his words at the moment were taken to imply; and the Commons rescinded, on the Tuesday night, the vote of the preceding Friday on the malt-tax. It is not to be wondered at, that the people were becoming dissatisfied with the way in which their financial affairs were decided on and conducted. Once more, during the session of 1833, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was in a minority on such matters. On the 16th of July, Mr. Ruthven carried a resolution in favor of relief by the abolition of all sinecures, obtaining a majority of nine over the government.¹ On this occasion, however, it was not necessary to act on the resolution, or to resign in consequence of it; and nothing ensued from this ministerial defeat.

Next year, affairs looked better. The estimates were reduced half a million; and Sir James Graham had been so active in his office at the Admiralty, that a reduction of nearly a million and a quarter on an expenditure of six millions had taken place in three years. The surplus for the year, ^{Surplus of 1834.} when the accounts were made up in July, 1834, was upwards of

¹ Hansard, xix. p. 704.

two millions. There would be a smaller surplus next year, because the interest of the twenty millions given to the West-India planters was to be payable from the ensuing 1st of August; but there would still be enough to admit of a considerable reduction of taxation, — probably 1,620,000¹. There was no occasion now for O'Connell to renew his proposition, made in April, to attack the debt, by reducing the interest arbitrarily one sixth; and then again, when wanted, — a proposition which excited so much outcry as made him glad to be silent upon it henceforth, and never more to try the House of Commons with talk of “the cant of national faith.”² It was no longer necessary, the House thought this year, to repeal the malt-duty; and Mr. Cobbett's motion for its abolition was voted down by an immense majority. It was not thought necessary for the House to attend to the subject of duties on food, as Mr. Hume proposed. Some members of the government voted with Mr. Hume, being previously pledged to advocate relaxations in the corn-laws. Lord Althorp, though made fully aware, long before, that the new poor-law was framed on the supposition of the repeal of the corn-laws, declared to the House that he should meet the motion with a direct negative, “although against his theoretical opinion;” and also, that “it was not the intention of the government, as a government, to introduce any measure for the alteration of the corn-laws, and that government, as a government, would not support any such measure, if introduced.”³ What remained was for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say what he could propose for the relief of the tax-paying public.

By some changes in the duties on the licences of dealers in spirits and in beer, he expected to raise his surplus to 1,815,000^l. Out of this he proposed to repeal the house-tax, — as before declared, — several minor assessed taxes, some small customs and excise duties which interfered with manufactures, and one of the stamp-duties, — that on almanacs, which produced some popular irritation. All these together would amount to upwards of a million and a half⁴. On this, the last occasion of Lord Althorp's responsibility to Parliament as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he spoke cheerfully of the condition and prospects of the country. While between six and seven millions of taxes had been taken off during his term of office, — immediately after large reductions by the preceding Ministry, — the income was reduced only 3,000,000^l. The reduction of the expenditure had been nearly two millions and a half; and provision would actually be made for our new obligations to the West

¹ Hansard, xxv. p. 502.

³ Hansard, xxi. p. 1323.

² Hansard, xxi. p. 685.

⁴ Hansard, xxv. p. 505.

Indies, not only without increased taxation, but at the same time with a diminution. It was certainly true that great improvements were taking place, and considerable relief granted from year to year; though the nation had yet to wait for an able administration of its financial affairs, and for any thing approaching to reform, or even revision, of its financial system.

Before the new English poor-law was framed, a poor-law for Ireland was proposed in Parliament by Mr. Sadler, in Poor-law for Ireland. June, 1832.¹ For various reasons, the general feeling was strongly against it. Several members implored the House and the Ministry not to subject Ireland to such a curse as the poor-law had been to England, till it should be proved that there was no better way of relieving the indigent. Ministers wished to wait to see the result of certain new arrangements in Ireland about rating for the benefit of the sick, from the success of which some hints might be derived. There was no subject on which O'Connell vacillated more than this; and there is no doubt that his irresolution was real. He had promised the poor Irish, that, when he came into Parliament, he would never rest till he had obtained a poor-law for them; but now he opposed Mr. Sadler's resolutions, and frequently afterwards alleged that a compulsory charity was irreligious, and tended to lessen the free alms-giving which he regarded as a duty and grace enjoined and commended in Scripture. In saying this, he truly represented the Catholic portion of his countrymen, and exhibited the main difficulty of that most difficult problem, — how to work a poor-law in the Catholic and most pauperized districts of Ireland. At a subsequent time, O'Connell assented to a poor-law, when in London, among reasoning men; and then again he repented, on the other side the channel, and implored pardon of God and man for his irreligious compliance; and then, once more, he changed, — not through profligacy in this case, apparently, but through a conflict between two sets of ideas and feelings which could not be made to agree. He had time for consideration; for the commission sent out to investigate and report upon the applicability of a poor-law to Ireland did not go forth on their work till 1835; but O'Connell was no more ready with a decision then than three years before.

The refusal of Parliament during this period to entertain any proposition for a registry of deeds relating to real property, was striking and perplexing to foreigners and Registry of deeds. persons unfamiliar with the interests of the landed aristocracy in our country. Bills were brought in by Mr. Campbell and Mr. William Brougham, — measures which were declared to be well framed and unobjectionable, — yet the House of Commons re-

¹ Hansard, xiii. p. 831.

jected them again and again. No one openly disputed the need of such a registry. It was allowed to be a hardship, that, when a purchaser was buying land, he had no means of clearly ascertaining whether he had access to all the deeds which could affect the title. It was admitted that nothing could be more just, more simply convenient, than a general registry of deeds, which should put a purchaser in possession of his own case, and secure him from all risk from evidence, concealed through design or accident, which might affect his purchase after he had paid for it. Yet the House would not accept any measure of the kind; and both Mr. Campbell's and Mr. W. Brougham's were got rid of on such frivolous pretences as to convey an irresistible impression that the landed interest had unavowed reasons for what they did. When they thus set people guessing, the reason assigned was, that they were afraid of their mortgages becoming known, — afraid that it would no longer remain a secret how their estates were encumbered. Mr. Campbell's first announcement of his measure was in December, 1830, and Mr. W. Brougham's in May, 1833; and the second rejection of the latter measure took place, May 7, 1834, by a majority of 161 to 45 against the second reading; and a curious social symptom this appeared to all thoughtful observers.¹

There was another case, far more important than this, in regard to which the whole world was aware that men's speech did not answer to their thought. There was another measure which Parliament rejected, year after year, for pretences so utterly untenable as to show that the real reasons for opposition were unavowed. This was the ballot. Of course, every man was at full liberty to dislike and deprecate the ballot. The peculiarity of the case was in the assigning of various reasons so incompatible as to make the listener look round, and wonder at the gravity with which the argument was carried on. The case to be met was simply this: The extended franchise was not fully exercised. The negligent possessors were lectured, rebuked, sounded, canvassed; but they, in large numbers, omitted to vote. Anxious as they had been for the Reform Bill, they now did not use its privileges. Their reason was that the Bill did not furnish the needful safeguards of their new responsibility. Intimidation of voters ran as high as ever; and Lord Althorp, the long-declared advocate of the protecting ballot, now thought himself obliged to be mute and idle, and leave the tradesman and the farmer, and every voter who had any connection with a class above him, to the mercy of his neighbors or his patrons. Year after year did Mr. Grote bring forward his motion in favor of the ballot for the protection of voters; and year after year was

¹ Hansard, xxiii. p. 740.

he met by the same incompatible objections,—that it would not work, and that it would work too well; that Britons will not be bribed, and that they would be bribed incessantly under the cover of the ballot; that the voting classes are of too high an order to be insulted with such a protection, and that broad publicity was necessary to keep them up to their duty. Thus the question was met, from year to year, till, through a singular virtual coalition between two opposite classes, the popular demand for the ballot was overpowered. The aristocracy would not surrender their influence over the dependent class of voters; and that influence was known to be so powerful, through intimidation where bribery would not avail, that the vast multitude of non-electors took upon themselves to watch over its operation. The electors were their representatives; and this secondary representation they were resolved not to relinquish. They could send up an influence from below as powerful as that which brooded from above; and they would not, any more than the aristocracy, have it intercepted by the ballot. Such was the issue of the painful state of the question which lasted during this period, when those who declared in favor of this protection of voters would not act; and those who did, were insulted with pleas which were understood all round to be mere disguises of real reasons which no man had courage to avow. Something would have been gained to the heart and courage of the nation, and probably nothing lost to its reputation, if the annual debate had been cut short with the declaration, “We will not give up our power over the voting classes. By mere threats of ruin we can now make tools of our tradesmen and farmers, or keep them quiet; and no harm is done. If they were to be really free in the exercise of the franchise, there is no saying what confusion would ensue; and we only know that all control from us would be at an end.” Such was the state of things after the passage of the Reform Bill; a state of things sickening to the hearts of many thousands of husbands and fathers, who would have dared any thing for themselves, but could not see that their political duty required them to bring ruin on their households. Such neglected to qualify,—setting a bad example therein, and in so far abrogating the Reform Act. And, in the midst of a representative system like this,—a system which worked imperfectly where it did not work viciously, the ministers took occasion to say, on all fair opportunities, that they considered the Reform Act final. While it was scarcely possible to exaggerate its value, and the importance of the era which it formed, it was because it opened the way to the achievement hereafter of a real representation, and not because the largest classes of the British nation were actually and immediately represented much more truly than be-

fore. As the ballot was not decreed in its own time, it only remains to be seen what stronger security for true representation will have to be accorded at a later day. That such an event is in store is an irresistible conclusion from reading the debates on the ballot during the period under review.

The question of military flogging was brought forward year by year by Mr. Hume; and, by the session of 1833, Military flogging.

it was clear that the debate was becoming more and more embarrassing to men who had always spoken with a natural horror of the flogging of soldiers, but who had lately become aware of the weight of military authority on the other side. After the summer of 1832, every one had perceived that the abolition of military flogging was only a question of time. In May of that year, a private of the Scots Greys had been flogged under circumstances which induced a universal belief that his real offence was not a breach of discipline in the riding-school, as alleged, but his having written a political letter to a newspaper. A court of inquiry was held in July, and a sort of reprimand was adjudged to the officer in command. The publicity given to the facts greatly aided the cause advocated by Mr. Hume; and, in the next division, there was a majority of only eleven votes in a House of 291 members in favor of the existing system of military punishment.¹ The other fearful tyranny Impressment of seamen. which occurs to all minds in connection with this,—the impressment of seamen,—was now beginning to be treated in a tone of seriousness and humanity; and in August, 1833, a division took place less unworthy of the eighteenth year of peace, than some that had preceded. There was a majority of only five against Mr. Buckingham's motion, that it was the duty of the House to avail itself of the season of peace to inquire whether there was not some better method than that of impressment for manning ships in time of war.²

¹ Hansard, xvii. p. 68.

² Hansard, xx. p. 694.

CHAPTER XII.

A GLIMPSE is afforded us at this period of that awful interior of the history of the time of which registers and reports tell nothing. They tell nothing, because they know nothing, of those movements in some corner of the national heart and mind which are of graver moment than any thing that is laid open to all eyes. Things were going on, in the year 1834, which disheartened the few of the upper classes who knew of them, and whose calculations had been too sanguine as to the social effects of nineteen years of peace, and of four of liberal government. The good effects of peace and liberal government were in fact shown, not in the absence of ignorance and guilt among the people, but in the small results of their guilt and ignorance. If Sidmouth and Castlereagh had been in power, the year 1834 would have been as black a one to remember as that of the Cato-street conspiracy.

The prevalence and power of trades-unions have been referred to; and the murder of a Manchester manufacturer was mentioned at its date. The power and tyranny of the unions went on increasing, till, in 1834, it became a serious question whether their existence was compatible with the organization of society in England. Half-a-dozen uneducated men — sometimes one able but half-informed man — commanded an obedient host of tens of thousands; and, though the capitalists usually beat in the competition for victory set up by the laborers, the power of the latter over the production and commerce of the country was very great. At this time, a new combination gave an enormous increase of power into their hands. Hitherto, each body had struck for an advance of wages for itself. Now, the various trades combined for the purpose of supporting one another by turns. Some were to work, and maintain others who were contending for their objects; and, when these objects were gained, the good office was to be reciprocated. If the great body of laborers, or even the majority of their leaders, had been men of cultivated intelligence, and tempers disciplined accordingly, this year would probably have stood in our history as the date of a vast social revolution, wherein capital and labor would have

been brought into deadly conflict, or into some new and wonderful agreement. But though these bodies of laborers understood some momentous truths, and set some noble objects before them, — making sacrifices and arrangements for the education of their children, and the elevation of their own pursuits, — they were not, yet instructed and disciplined enough for permanent concert, and, therefore, for success. The tailors of London broke away from their compact, and struck work without the sanction of bodies earning smaller wages than they; and these trades refused to support the tailors. Then, some office-bearers — chosen unwisely — absconded with money, and others mismanaged the funds; and, from one cause or another, continued co-operation appeared to be impossible.

In the midst of this confusion, which would have presently settled the fate of the unions for a time, some events occurred, the gravity of which was then, and is now, but little understood by any but a few who did not tell what they knew, because it would not have been believed. Hitherto, the unions had been universally spoken of as those of trades; but now it appeared that the extremely poor, ignorant, and depressed agricultural laborers of the southern counties were banded together in unions, like the trades. It was the expression of that resistance to supposed tyranny which is the glory or the disgrace — the safeguard or the peril — of a State, according as it is enlightened by knowledge or darkened by passion. In this case, it was considered dangerous, and it was found to be inconvenient. These agricultural unions must be dissolved; and a method was used which brought after it endless mischief and shame. Six laboring-men were indicted at the spring assizes at Dorchester, not for any offence which they and others had ever thought of, but under an obsolete statute, enacted to meet the case of mutiny in the navy, and which made the administering of certain oaths a transportable offence. Ignorant as these men were, they knew that they were in fact charged with one offence and punished for another; and, rapidly as they were hurried out of the country, to undergo their sentence of seven years' transportation, they had time to become aware that public sympathy was with them. Public sympathy was with them, as with men punished by a stretch of law for a nominal offence, which did not repair the mischief of their example in that particular in which it was really wrong and dangerous. As for the unionists everywhere, they were exasperated; and they declared that the time was now come for them to rise, and overthrow the oppressors whose rule had hitherto disappointed their expectations, all the more bitterly for those expectations being in great part unreasonable.

By the unionists at large, it was agreed that a grand assem-

blage of all the trades should take place in or near London in April, to procure the recall of the Dorsetshire laborers. The day fixed on was the 21st of April, and the place Copenhagen Fields. This was all that the trades generally knew of the matter. Their leaders, however, agreed that the great unions could and should overawe the weak government of Lord Grey, — now in its latter days, — and obtain whatever they had set their minds upon. This was all that the leaders in general meditated; but there was a little knot of ferocious conspirators in the midst of them, who conducted a central movement, and resolved upon a violent seizure of the government, in the persons of the royal family and ministers.¹ The trades were requested to carry their tools, — those being specified which would best serve as weapons in the attack upon London. The “glorious band,” as the handful of conspirators called themselves, were to carry arms. Accompanying the deputation to the Home Office, they were there to seize the Minister at the moment of reception, dispose of everybody else in the office, let in co-adjutors, seize the other offices, take the King and Queen prisoners, secure the Bank and the Tower, and so forth. Lord Melbourne had graciously consented to receive the deputation on the 21st; and this would make the first step easy. He was declared to be “done for.” But he received warning, and attended to it; and the Duke of Wellington made ready for the occasion with his usual quietness and promptitude. The great day was a Monday. On Sunday night, twenty-nine pieces of artillery were brought in from Woolwich, and placed in the neighborhood of Whitehall, out of sight. Some light cannon were stationed on the roofs of the government offices, so as to command the streets. Large bodies of soldiery came into town during the night, and were kept ready for instant action, though under cover. The public offices were strongly guarded; the police stations were filled with their force, well armed; the magistrates were early at their posts; the park-gates were closed, and the citizens took the hints of the newspapers to stay at home; aides-de-camp were in the streets, in plain clothes, to reconnoitre; and five thousand householders were quickly sworn in as special constables at Guildhall. As for Lord Melbourne, he was not visible. The under-secretary, Mr. Phillips, received the deputation, and told them that a petition, however respectfully worded, could not be received by the Minister when brought in such a manner, nor could Lord Melbourne grant an interview to a deputation so accompanied; that is, by a procession of 30,000 men. So the petition was placed on its car, — a car all blue and crimson, — and carried away, to

¹ Autobiography of a Working-man, p. 409.

be presented again in a quiet and orderly manner, by a small deputation, five days afterwards. The whole procession repaired to Kennington Common, where Mr. Phillips's reply was repeated on various parts of the ground. There was no attempt to measure their strength against the Duke of Wellington, with his troops and cannon,—no attack upon the palace, the Bank, or the Tower. No soldiers were seen in the streets, and scarcely a policeman: when London was again asleep, the artillery and soldiery were conveyed away; and, next day, the great city was as if nothing had happened. The end of the matter, as regarded the Dorsetshire laborers, was, that public opinion bore so strongly upon their case, that a free pardon was sent out to them, in Van Diemen's Land; and they returned in 1837, to be escorted through the streets of London, and past the government offices, by a procession of the trades as numerous as that which had petitioned in their favor in 1834.

On the retirement of Lords Grey and Althorp, the anxiety of the nation about who was to govern the country was less eager than might have been anticipated. The cause of the comparative indifference was, that a universal persuasion was abroad that any government that could be formed out of any party must be merely temporary. The feeling in favor of a Liberal Ministry was still too strong to permit any hope to the Conservatives; while the unpopularity of the Whigs, and the known apprehensions of the King about Church questions, rendered it improbable that such a Cabinet as the last would keep any firm grasp of power.

It was immediately understood that the King's desire was for a Coalition Ministry. But this was clearly impracticable. Changes in the Cabinet. The Commons would hear of no other leader on government questions than Lord Althorp; and they earnestly desired that he should be the head of the government. His station and character would have justified the appointment; and his unsurpassed popularity in Parliament—a popularity which could not be fleeting, because it was grounded on fine qualities of mind and manners—would have been a strong point in favor of his administration. But he had not ability for such a position. He said so himself, and everybody knew it. His being Premier was out of the question, but he was not to be parted with from office; and he gave up with a sigh the prospect of retirement to his country business and pleasures, received a pledge that the new Coercion Bill should be framed to meet his views, and became again Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was Lord Melbourne, and no one else, with whom the King consulted upon the reconstruction of the Cabinet. Lord Melbourne becoming Premier, his place at the Home Office was taken by Lord Duncannon, —

made a Peer; and Sir J. C. Hobhouse took the Woods and Forests, with a seat in the Cabinet.

The first act of the reconstituted government was to carry a new Coercion Bill, in which the clauses prohibitory of political meetings were omitted. The subject of the ^{Late in-}trigues. late intrigues and follies, by which Lord Grey had been removed from office, was not allowed to drop. Repeated demands were made for the production of the Lord Lieutenant's correspondence; and the son of Lord Grey pressed Mr. Littleton with close questions as to who, besides himself, had been the correspondent of the Lord Lieutenant. Mr. Littleton had suffered too much to be indiscreet again: he positively refused to answer; but it was not denied that there was another. In the Upper House, the Lord Chancellor astonished his hearers by declaring his dissent from Lord Grey in regard to Mr. Littleton's act of communicating with Mr. O'Connell. "He did not know how government could be carried on, if certain leading men were to be considered as tabooed and interdicted from all communication with the government."¹ When, after making this declaration, he proceeded to avow that he had privately corresponded with the Lord Lieutenant about the Coercion Bill, men felt that no answer was needed from Mr. Littleton to Lord Howick's pressing questions. "He was also" — after mentioning Mr. Littleton's correspondence — "in the frequent habit of corresponding with the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He had communicated with him on every subject interesting on this or the other side of the water." The newspapers of the time pointed out the Lord Chancellor as the "accomplice" of Mr. Littleton in writing the letter which changed the Lord Lieutenant's opinion on the Coercion Bill, without the knowledge of the Premier; and they further asked whether any Cabinet could be safe with a member in it who could so perplex its councils. The experiment proved a short one.

The liberal party believed that it had gained by the changes in the Cabinet; and a more frank and genial spirit of liberalism seemed to spread itself through the government after Lord Melbourne's entrance upon his new office. He was as yet little known in official life; but those who knew him best spoke well of him: he did not suffer under any lack of warning that much had been borne with from Lord Grey that would be fatal to the power of any one else; and the new Premier took such warnings in good part. The session was nearly over, — a session in which a vast amount of real business had been done, in the midst of all its mistakes and misadventures: the work of the government lay clear before it; and here was the recess just at hand, in which

¹ Hansard, xxv. p. 692.

the measures of the next session might be prepared, — for nobody dreamed of a change of Ministry and of principles of government before the next session could begin. On the whole, Lord Melbourne's Administration opened cheerfully; and the King's speech, on the 15th of August, was animated in its tone.

The autumn was variously occupied by the leaders of the parties and the destinies of the kingdom. Mr. O'Connell published a series of letters to the Home Secretary which could be of no service to any good cause from their violence of language, and in this case only aggravated the indisposition of his Irish supporters to receive with a fair construction any measures offered by the Imperial Government. The "Slaughter of Rathcormack," which took place in November, and which was a prominent theme with O'Connell during the remainder of his life, might not perhaps have happened if he had not exhorted the people to impatience instead of patience, pending the trial of the government measures in regard to tithe. Some peasants, who were opposing the collection of tithe, barred themselves into the yard of a cottage, as an escape from the military who were escorting the clergyman — Archdeacon Ryder — in his tithe-collecting excursion. The gate of the yard was forced, the soldiers fired, and thirteen men were killed, and eight wounded. Eleven of the thirteen were fathers of families. The widow paid her tithe, and the archdeacon "proceeded to collect his tithes throughout the parish without further molestation."¹ He left behind him the people shutting their shops in the village, and driving every cow and pig out of sight for miles round; and bereaved fathers kneeling, with clasped hands, to utter curses on the government, civil and ecclesiastical, which brought such desolation in the name of religion. O'Connell lost no time, and spared no strength, in exasperating the discontent, as if no healing measures had yet been entered upon.

Meantime, the Lord Chancellor was recreating himself, after a long stretch of arduous business, with a journey in Scotland; before the close of which some incidents occurred which deeply affected a part of the history of future years. He went from town to town, from one public reception to another, opening his mind to any hearers, on any subject; and thus the amount of egotism and indiscretion accumulated in ten days' time so as to fill the newspapers of the day, and fix universal attention. It was on this journey that he declared, at Inverness, that he should let his sovereign know by that night's post how loyal were his subjects in the north of Scotland; a promise which was found not to have been fulfilled. About such proceedings as these, men might laugh and be amused; but a

The Lord
Chancellor.

¹ Spectator, 1834, p. 1226.

scene full of seriousness and significance, and pregnant with political results, took place at Edinburgh, which caused the shedding of many tears in private, and the disappointment of much national hope at a subsequent time. Lord Grey was travelling northwards during this autumn, — conveyed in a sort of triumph to his home, and beyond it, to Edinburgh, where a great banquet was given in his honor on the 15th of September. Among the members of his family who attended him was Lord Lord Durham. Durham, at once the trusted friend of the old statesman, and the beloved of the people. He was the principal framer of the Reform Bill, the consistent advocate of all genuine reforms, — a man of the rarest honesty, which took the character of genius for the recognition of truth and right, and for the expression of it. When Lord Grey had earnestly desired his presence in the Cabinet in the summer, he was kept out by the Lord Chancellor and another, and the Liberals in the Commons had expressed their sense of this act by an address to Lord Grey. Notwithstanding these circumstances, the Lord Chan- The Grey banquet. cellor appeared at the Grey banquet at Edinburgh; and nothing, as far as was known, had passed between the honored guest of that banquet and himself, which need hinder his being present. He made a speech, the most prominent part of which consisted of rebuke to reformers, who, in a fretful impatience, endangered all progress by rash attempts to go too fast.¹ His language was so figurative, that it is possible that he lost sight, in the pursuit of a succession of metaphors, of the substance of what he meant to convey, or of the impression which it would make on his hearers; but the great body of listeners — who were nearly three thousand — certainly understood him to desire a slackening pace of reform, and less pressure of popular will on the government; and it was in this understanding that Mr. Abercromby, Mr. Ellice, and Sir J. C. Hobhouse responded to the appeal of Lord Durham, and followed up his speech, — the celebrated speech of that day, — of which some words passed into a proverb, which sustained the heart and hope of the people at the time, but which, in the end, cost him his life, and set back the great work of colonial reform. The most memorable words of that speech, the words which were received at the moment with an enthusiasm that spread over the whole kingdom, were these:² “My noble and learned friend, Lord Brougham, has been pleased to give some advice, which I have no doubt he deems very sound, to some classes of persons — I know none such — who evince too strong a desire to get rid of ancient abuses, and fretful impatience in awaiting the remedies of them. Now, I frankly confess I am one of those persons who see with regret

¹ Spectator, 1834, p. 891. ² England's Seven Administrations, iii. p. 114.

every hour which passes over the existence of recognized and unreformed abuses." These words were received with cheers which seemed as if they would never end; and, when single voices could be heard, one member of the government after another responded heartily, and said that it was good for public men to witness such scenes and hear such truths: it kept them up to their duty. Among these voices, however, the Lord Chancellor's was not heard. He sat mute,—mute at the moment, but not elsewhere. He travelled fast, and was presently at Salisbury, making a speech of defiance against Lord Durham, in which he challenged him to a meeting in the House of Lords. In the number of the "Edinburgh Review" which appeared immediately afterwards, there was an article whose authorship was evident enough, and was never denied by either the editor or the presumed writer, which charged Lord Durham with having opposed a thorough reform of Parliament in the Cabinet, and with the gravest breach of trust,—with revealing the secrets of the Cabinet. By the Salisbury challenge, this quarrel—interesting in itself, as between two eminent liberal leaders—was made a matter of public principle; and it was inevitable that Lord Durham should be regarded as the stanch reformer that he had ever shown himself to be, while Lord Brougham offered himself as the representative of the retarding or "drag" system of government, as it was then called. Hence it was that those words of Lord Durham at the Grey banquet passed immediately into a proverb, and were taken as a text for political discourses, and were seen on banners, and as mottoes to newspapers and tracts. Hence it was, too, that the vindication of Lord Durham's honor became a public concern. It is probable that no one ever doubted his honor; but such a charge as that of betraying cabinet secrets must be met,—difficult as it was to do so without a betrayal of cabinet secrets in the act of defence. The thing was done, and well done, at a banquet given to Lord Durham, at Glasgow, on the 29th of October. He there read a letter from Lord Grey which settled the question.¹ Lord Grey declared his opinion that it was impossible for Lord Durham to reveal, for his own justification, any thing that had passed in the Cabinet; but he offered his own unqualified testimony to Lord Durham's fidelity to his public professions and his official duty. This testimony of the Prime Minister was enough; and the past was settled. As for the future, there was to be first a passage of words in the House of Lords. To this men began to look forward eagerly. They saw no further, and little dreamed what consequences of this hostility lay hid in the future. And, as a few days proved, they could not see so far as even the opening

Prospect of
new parties.

¹ Spectator, 1834, p. 1033.

of the session. "He has been pleased," said Lord Durham, of his antagonist, "to challenge me to meet him in the House of Lords.¹ I know well the meaning of the taunt. He is aware of his infinite superiority over me in one respect; and so am I. He is a practised orator and a powerful debater. I am not. I speak but seldom in Parliament, and always with reluctance in an assembly where I meet with no sympathy from an unwilling majority. He knows full well the advantage which he has over me; and he knows, too, that in any attack which he may make on me in the House of Lords, he will be warmly and cordially supported by them. With all these manifold advantages, almost overwhelming, I fear him not; and I will meet him there, if it be unfortunately necessary to repeat what he was pleased to term my 'criticisms.'" Thus did the ground appear to be prepared for a new assertion of the people's cause, in regard to the reforms remaining to be achieved; but, before the time came, the King had interposed, — Lord Brougham had taken leave of office, and the Conservative party was in power. The King, it was understood, did not look forward with any satisfaction to the proposed controversy in the House of Lords; and his mind had long been uneasy about the treatment of the Irish Church by the Whig Ministry. He seized the occasion of the death of Lord Spencer — by which Lord Althorp was raised to the peerage — to dismiss his ministers, and seek for satisfaction to his mind from the opposite party.

The surprise to the ministers themselves appears to have been great. All that had happened was, that Lord Althorp could no longer be Chancellor of the Exchequer, from his removal to the Upper House. But Lord Melbourne had an immediate resource in Lord John Russell. He went down to Brighton on the 13th, and remained there till the Friday evening, when he returned to town, to tell his colleagues that the King had sent for the Duke of Wellington. Whether he had any thing more to tell, — whether he understood any secret causes of a change so sudden, — or whether he agreed with the general belief as to the King's apprehensions and dislikes, there is no saying. The one fact of the case avowed by Lord Melbourne was, that he was taken by surprise, — the cordiality of the King towards himself having never been interrupted.

The event occasioned a prodigious sensation, abroad as well as at home. French politics were forgotten at Paris; and on the quays of New York, New Orleans, and Boston, men stood in groups to read the papers or discuss the news. Here was an experiment of a recurrence to principles of government which had been solemnly, and with much sacrifice on every hand, dis-

¹ Spectator, 1834, p. 1034.

avowed by the British nation. The most interesting spectacle to the world now was of the success or failure of the experiment. Those who looked at the weakness and faults of the Whig administrations of the last four years believed it would succeed. Those who looked deeper — into the mind, so lately declared, of the English people — knew that it would fail. But the suspense was exciting and painful, — more exciting and painful than people could believe a year afterwards; for it was not long before the Whigs were in again, with Lord Melbourne at their head, but not with Lord Brougham on the woolsack. Lord

Retirement
of Lord
Brougham.

Brougham now finally left office, after having held the great seal four years. He did not, however, acquiesce at the moment in the relinquishment of all office.

The Duke of Wellington could not fill up all the appointments for some time, as Sir Robert Peel's presence was indispensable, and Sir Robert Peel was at Rome; but the Lord Chancellor

Lord Lynd-
hurst suc-
ceeds.

must clearly be Lord Lyndhurst, and he was appointed at once, — on the 21st of November.¹ Lord Brougham immediately wrote to him, to offer to take, without

salary, the office of chief baron, actually held by Lord Lyndhurst. The application did not succeed. Lord Lyndhurst could say nothing till the return of Sir Robert Peel; and, before that return, Lord Brougham had withdrawn his request. The public voice on this act was not to be mistaken. Lord Brougham pleaded that his intention was to save 12,000*l.* a year to the country, and to spare suitors the evils of a double appeal:² but this last object, of the abolition of the vice-chancellorship, he had not pursued during the four years when the power of chancery-reform was in his hands; and, as for the saving of salary, the general feeling was that it would have been no compensation for the evil of the "political immorality" of taking office under the Conservatives, in a manner which indicated confidence in their remaining in power. Lord Brougham therefore withdrew his application, but not before the act had affected his political reputation in foreign countries, where all preceding inconsistencies had been allowed for, or unrecognized.

In reviewing his four years of office, the most agreeable point to dwell upon is his activity in his function, and in the cause of law reform. In the summer of 1830, he had

Lord Brough-
am's law-re-
forms.

brought forward a Bill for the establishment of courts of local jurisdiction in certain districts, intended to apply afterwards to the whole of the kingdom. By this measure

Local-courts
Bill.

it was hoped that justice would be rendered cheap and easy of attainment in a number of cases where it could not be

¹ Annual Register, 1834, p. 336.

² Lord Brougham's Letter to Bulwer, December, 1834.

had by multitudes, unless brought near their doors. As soon as he was in office,—in December, 1830,—Lord Brougham brought forward this measure in the House of Peers, where it was laid on the table for consideration, being, as Lord Lyndhurst testified, an affair of the very highest importance; one consideration being that it would create fifty new courts, with fifty new judges and their establishments. To the great grief of its author, and of all who intelligently wished that justice should be accessible to every citizen, this, which was called, both lightly and seriously, the Poor Man's Bill, was thrown out by the Lords on the 9th of July, 1833.¹ The rejection of the measure was believed to be owing to the fear that it would draw away too much business from the higher courts, impose too much expense, and yield too much patronage. In the session of 1833, Lord Brougham brought in a Bill, which was passed by the Commons on the 22d of August, for abolishing thirteen offices in the Court of Chancery, and reducing others, effecting Chancery-reform. altogether a saving of about 70,000*l*.² Lord Eldon³ did not think he should be able to persuade himself to go down to Parliament again,—he had, as God knew, too little strength to spend on an attendance utterly hopeless; and it weighed him down more than he could endure, to observe what was going on there, and how. This was written while waiting upon the progress of this Bill, “vindicating his own conduct” the while, and objecting “to the haste” with which Parliament was abolishing thirteen sinecures which had flourished under his own eye. Alas! there was other haste to object to,—in the Chancellor's judicial function. The clearance of business that he effected in the Court of Chancery was such as to make his predecessor feel as if the “iron mace,” that Sydney Smith spoke of, were swinging about his ears.⁴ “For twenty-five long years,” said Sydney Smith, just after the coming-in of the Grey Ministry, “did Lord Eldon sit in that court, surrounded with misery and sorrow, which he never held up a finger to alleviate. The widow and the orphan cried to him, as vainly as the town-crier cries when he offers a small reward for a full purse; the bankrupt of the court became the lunatic of the court; estates mouldered away, and mansions fell down: but the fees came in, and all was well. But in an instant the iron mace of Brougham shivered to atoms this house of fraud and of delay.” And it is true that from that hour we have heard no more of the delays in the Court of Chancery being ruinous to property, as well as trying to the patience. It is true, also, that there was at the time, and has been since, much impugning of the quality of the judgments

¹ Hansard, xix. p. 372.² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 187.³ Hansard, xx. p. 831.⁴ Works, iii. p. 129.

which were dispensed so industriously and so promptly. However this may be, — whatever might be true about Lord Brougham's qualifications for such a post of judicial decision, — there can be no question of the benefit to the country, after so long a rule of Lord Eldon's, of the clearance which was made by Lord Brougham. At another period, the quality of the judge's law must be the first consideration: then, and for once, there was something more important, — that racked minds should be eased, and unsettled minds certified; that a vast amount of deteriorating property should be restored to use and good management; and that the reproach of the highest court of the realm — the reproach of being a bottomless pit of perdition — should cease.¹ In Lord Brougham's farewell to the court, on the 21st of November, he said, after lamenting the compulsion which obliged him to give up the seals in haste, "I have the greatest satisfaction in reflecting that this court, represented by its enemies as the temple of discord, delay, and expense, has been twice closed within the space of five months." He went on to ascribe the merit of this to the Vice-Chancellor and late Master of the Rolls, and also to the bar; but these functionaries all existed in Lord Eldon's days, and did not save the court from its reproach. Lord Brougham was himself the spring of their activity, as Lord Eldon had been the check upon it; and Lord Brougham was, doubtless, entitled to the satisfaction he naturally expressed on this parting occasion. As for the rest, it is not necessary here to enter into the controversy between himself and his contemporaries as to the share he had in promoting some good measures, and defeating others.² "I should be only fatiguing you," he wrote to Mr. Bulwer, "were I to name the other measures of large and uncompromising reform with which my name is connected." There were, indeed, many popular interests in former years with which his name was connected; and it should not, and will not, be forgotten, amidst speculations on his short official career, that, in early and unpromising days, the most conspicuous advocate of political reforms, and of education, and the most effectual denouncer of negro slavery, and of tyranny in every form, was the Henry Brougham who, in 1834, was sighing for that position among commoners in which he had won his fame. At public meetings in London, and latterly in Scotland, he earnestly put forward his regrets that he had ever quitted the scene of his triumphs, the House of Commons, and his longing to "undo the patent" of his nobility; and there were many who lamented that he should ever have left the ranks of opposition. Such now hailed his retirement from office, and the clear indica-

¹ Annual Register, 1834, Chron. p. 176.

² Lord Brougham's Letter to Mr. Bulwer, December, 1834.

tions of circumstances that the retirement was final ; for they had a lingering expectation, that, though in another House, he might resume his old habits, and be again the hope of the oppressed, and a terror to tyranny in high places.

Lord Althorp, now become Lord Spencer, was thus soon at liberty to enter upon the privacy he sighed for. He never returned to office. Perhaps no man ever left ^{Retirement of Lord Spencer.} the House of Commons and an official seat about whom there was so little difference of opinion among all parties. Nobody supposed him an able statesman ; and nobody failed to recognise his candor, his love of justice, his simplicity of heart, and his kindliness and dignity of temper and manners.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE affairs of France during this period were only less interesting to the English than their own; and the proceedings of England were commented on by French statesmen of every party from day to day. English Conservatives found cause for apprehension, during the whole struggle for reform, that we were proceeding *pari passu* with the revolutionists of France; and English Liberals watched with interest whether it was so, while French affairs were undecided. The eyes of the world were fixed on Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, from the moment when he accepted the office of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, before Charles X. and the Dauphin sent in their abdication, and set forth for exile. This Louis Philippe, whose father had died on the scaffold in the first revolution, who had known the depths of poverty, and been long lost in obscurity, was now at the head of the French nation; and it was a spectacle of eager interest how he would conduct himself there. He had walked, almost barefooted, over the Alps, and had taught mathematics in a school in Switzerland. He had lived humbly on the banks of the Thames; he had been a modest resident in Philadelphia, where he had fallen in love with a lady whose father refused his addresses as a match too inferior for his daughter; and he was now the centre of order in France, and the hope of all who craved the continuance of monarchy, and also of those who desired a safe and firm republic. The abdication of the King was placed in his hands at eleven o'clock of the night of the 2d of August; and, the next day, he opened the session of the Chambers, which met punctually according to the order of the late King, given some months before.

His speech declared his disinclination to his present prominent position; but his willingness, as that position was assigned him by the will of the nation, to accept all its consequences, — all the consequences of a free government.¹ He pointed out to the Chambers the subjects which it was necessary for them to consider first; and especially the fourteenth article of the charter, of which the late ministers had availed themselves to assume that

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1830, p. 195.

the King had a power beyond the law, when a crisis should render the observance of the law incompatible with legal rule. While delivering this speech, he stood on the platform covered with crimson velvet, strewn over with golden *fleurs-de-lis*, and the tricolored flag waving over his head. It was observed that he left the royal chair vacant, and took the lower seat on the right of the throne, while his second son took that on the left. His duchess and her daughters were present in a gallery, provided for the purpose; and every one remarked the expression of mournful gravity in the countenance of the anxious wife,—the expression which has marked that countenance to this day.

The Chambers were not satisfied with considering the fourteenth article of the charter. There was much besides which must be changed; for what was needed now was not the charter with a new executive, but one declaratory of such new principles as would be a better safeguard than the last had been. The preamble, for instance, declared the charter to be a gift from the King to his people; and, if this had ever been true, it was not so now. The whole must be revised. It was revised; and never, perhaps, had a work of so much importance been done so rapidly. The venerable Lafayette, commander-in-chief of the National Guard, kept watch over the deputies to prevent their being disturbed. Vast crowds outside shouted day and night for their various objects, and especially for the abolition of the hereditary peerage; but Lafayette stood between them and the Legislature, and permitted no disturbing influences to penetrate to the chamber of deliberation. On the night of the 6th, the whole was prepared. The throne was declared, by the new preamble, vacant by the forfeiture of the whole elder branch of the Bourbons. By alterations in the charter, all Christian denominations of religion were ordained to be supported by the State; and, in the following December, the Jewish religion was added. The censorship of the press was abolished for ever. The King was declared to have no power to suspend the laws, or to dispense with their execution. No foreign troops were to be taken into the service of the State without an express law. The age of eligibility to the Chamber was fixed at thirty. These were the alterations; and the charter, thus amended, was placed under the protection of the National Guard and the citizens of the empire. By a special provision, the peerages conferred by the late King were annulled, and the question of a hereditary peerage was reserved for consideration in the session of 1831. Two Peers degraded by this special provision were immediately re-instated,—Marshal Soult and Admiral Duperre. Several Peers recorded their protest against this act of the

Lower Chamber which concerned them; and the whole peerage-question stood over to the next session.

There was not, perhaps, a more anxious mind in France than that of Lafayette, between the 3d and the 9th of August. He was a republican, and he could now have established a republic; but whether France, as a whole, desired it, and whether the French people were fit for it, he could not decide; and the necessity of making a decision was an occasion of great anguish to him. He afterwards believed that he had decided wrong in offering the throne to Louis Philippe; and he never again knew what it was to have an easy mind. His last words, spoken from his pillow, were, "He is a knave; and we are the victims of his knavery,"—"C'est un fourbe; et nous sommes les victimes de sa fourberie." It was on the night of the 6th of August, as we have seen, that the deputies finished their work. Whether Lafayette hoped or feared delay in the Upper Chamber, there was none. On the 7th, the Peers passed the measure,—only ten being dissentient on any part but that relating to their own order.¹ The old royalist Chateaubriand objected to the throne being declared vacant while the infant son of the Duke de Berri lived: but these were no times for a child to occupy the throne; and the exclusion of the whole of the elder branch of the Bourbons was a point on which the nation at large was determined.

Louis Philippe accepts the Crown. Lafayette's time for deliberation was past. On the 9th he had to assist in offering the Constitution and the Crown to Louis Philippe.

The time was so short as to place the foreign ambassadors in great difficulty. They could not receive instructions from home; and, at the ceremony, while every other part of the Chamber of Deputies was crowded, their gallery contained only ladies and a few attachés. The golden *fleurs-de-lis* had disappeared from the drapery about the throne, and four large tricolored flags were disposed behind it. Instead of the anointing of the sovereign, there was to be the solemnity of swearing to the charter. Ninety Peers were present; and those absent were the seventy-six of the creation of the late King, and those who had protested against the new charter. The royalist deputies were all absent. At the opening of the business, the Duke was seated on a chair in front of the throne, his head covered, and his sons standing on either hand. While thus seated, he asked that the declaration of the 7th of August, as agreed to by the Peers, should be read, and then delivered to him; and then said, addressing the Peers and the deputies, "I have read with great attention the declaration of the Chamber of Deputies, and the act of agreement of the Chamber of Peers. I have weighed and meditated all their

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1830, p. 245

expressions. I accept, without restriction or reserve, the clauses and engagements which this declaration contains, and the title of King of the French which it confers upon me; and I am ready to swear to their observance." Here he rose, and received in his left hand the form of the oath. The whole assembly rose, in solemn emotion; and the new King, baring his head and raising his right hand, pronounced the oath in a firm, clear, and solemn voice: "In the presence of God, I swear to observe faithfully the constitutional charter, with the modifications expressed in the declaration; to govern only through the laws, and according to the laws; to cause good and exact justice to be rendered to every one according to his right; and to act in all things with a single view to the interest, the happiness, and the glory of the French nation." The diversity of the cries which composed the acclamation that followed was remarked by all, and derided by some who said that the very legislature did not know what to call the new King they had been in such a hurry to make. "Long live the King!"—"Long live Philippe the Seventh!"—"Long live Philippe the First!" were the cries, which, however, soon mingled in one great shout of "Long live the King of the French!" Others thought it a good symbol of the absorption of ancient territorial regalities in the chieftainship of a people.

The man has lived long; the King not so long. There was a picture of this ceremonial—of Louis Philippe swearing to the charter—which men thought would remain through many ages as a historical record of a great new era in the history of France. Men thought that their posterity in distant centuries would look upon the central figure of that picture,—the bared head, the raised hand, the lettered parchment,—and would regard them as the insignia of a new and lofty chieftainship, under which liberty and peace should be established in France. But already that picture has been torn from its frame in the royal palace, and carried out to be draggled in the dust, and cut to shreds. The act which it represented had rottenness in it; and one characteristic of the time which had set in was, as indeed it is of all times since the dark ages, that nothing abides that is not sound and true.

Four marshals of France now brought the crown and sceptre, and other insignia of royalty, with which they invested the new King. As he returned with his family to the Palais Royal, escorted by the National Guard, the multitude extended to the remotest points within view; and, of that sea of heads, all eyes were fixed upon the Citizen-king. At the same moment, the displaced family were taking their way, neglected and forlorn, to the coast,—the very peasants on the road scarcely looking up at them as they passed.

For a while — a very little while — all looked gay and bright about the new royal family, — except the countenance of the mournful Queen. She and her daughters visited in the hospitals the wounded of the days of July. The King invited to his table members of the deputations which came to congratulate him on his courage in accepting the crown. Sometimes there were officers of the National Guard, sometimes students from the colleges, sometimes municipal dignitaries from the provinces, sitting down to dinner with the King and his many children, like a large family-party. These children were idolized. Together with caricatures of the exiled family, were handed about prints of the Orleans group, each member of which was made beautiful, noble, or graceful. All this was very natural. A fearful oppression had been removed; the revolution had been nobly conducted, and now there was a bright, new hope, to gladden many hearts. But

under all this there were the elements of future trouble; and distress was already existing to a fearful extent. The pains and penalties of revolution were upon the people; and, amidst all the rejoicing, there was stagnation of trade, depression of commercial credit, and hunger among the operative classes. Higher in society, there was a beginning of that conflict between the parties of movement and resistance which is a necessary consequence of political convulsion. Before the end of the year, two administrations had been in power: the first containing originally but one member of the movement party, but being presently rendered a coalition government; and the second being perpetually in collision with the Chamber of Deputies. The executive was kept in continual anxiety by seditious movements which took place, in capital or country, at short intervals. The royal family, besides its share in all these interests, had to endure a great shock in the suicide of the Duke de Bourbon, the last of the Condés. He had been one of the Bourbon exiles, and retained the prejudices of his party; and, whether his suicide was owing to his grief at the revolution or to domestic miseries, it was most painful to the family of the new King, to one of whose sons he bequeathed the greater part of his wealth, under domestic influences of a dishonorable character. Thus, amidst much gloom and apprehension, closed the year of the revolution, leaving much to be done and endured during the next.

Suicide of
the Duke
de Bourbon.

In February, a most alarming disturbance took place in Paris, which ended in the sacking of a church, and the destruction of the Archbishop's palace.¹ The anniversary of the assassination of the Duke de Berri was kept by a religious service, notwithstanding a warning from the Archbishop

Disturbance
in Paris.

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1831, p. 81.

of Paris of the danger of such an appeal to political passions. Some one fastened a print of the little Duke de Bourdeaux on the drapery of the funeral-car in the church, and placed over it a crown of everlastings. The crown was pulled to pieces by royalists who were anxious to wear its blossoms next their hearts. Murmurs spread, and the excitement was presently such as to call for the clearance of the church by the National Guard. But the people outside turned their indignation against the priest and the Archbishop, who might have prevented this royalist scandal; and the mob rose against the church and the palace, and destroyed also the Archbishop's country-house. One consequence of this riot was that the *fleur-de-lis* now disappeared altogether. It had been twined round the crosses in the churches and elsewhere, to symbolize the union of devotion and loyalty; and now it was found, that, if they were not separated, the cross would be made to share the fate of the "flowers of kings." The government charged itself with stripping the crosses of their lilies, the seal of State was altered, and the *fleur-de-lis* was proscribed thus soon after those who had worn it. Before the year was out, the Chambers had decreed the perpetual banishment of the elder branch of the Bourbons, and the sale of all their effects within six months. The same measure was dealt out to the family of Napoleon.

As for the other measures of the Parliament, the most important regarded the constitution of the two Chambers. The hereditary peerage was abolished; and the power of the King to nominate Peers was restricted within Constitution of the Chambers. certain defined classes of persons, under declared conditions of fortune and length of service. It is difficult to see what remained after this, to make a peerage desirable,—at least, without a change of name. To sit in an Upper House, and be graced by the sovereign, might be an honor; but it is one altogether apart from all former ideas of peerage. It was easy to carry this Bill through the Chamber of Deputies; but what was to be done next? There was no doubt of a majority in the Upper House against the abolition of the hereditary principle. It was necessary to create peers for the occasion; and there was a creation of thirty-six. The Liberals were as angry as the Peers at this proceeding, which they considered illegal and tyrannical. The plea of the government was the singular nature of the emergency. The Peers showed their wrath in sullen silence; the Liberals, in clamor. During the whole proceeding, scarcely a sound was heard in the Upper Chamber. The voting was conducted, as nearly as possible, as it would have been in an assembly of the dumb. The majority by which the hereditary peerage was abolished in France was thirty-three. One touch-

ing incident which followed upon this act was, that thirteen Peers sent in to the president of their chamber, a week or two afterwards, their abdication of their rank and privileges.¹ In their letters they assigned as their reason the abolition of the hereditary principle. The president received the letters, but refused to read them aloud. In considering the conduct of the British House of Lords with regard to the Reform Bill, it should be borne in mind what was passing in France. When there was a threat of a large creation of Peers to carry the Bill, it was by a natural association of ideas that British noblemen, seeing what was doing at Paris, apprehended the abolition of their hereditary dignities, and looked upon their eldest sons as too likely to become commoners; while the family titles and honors would either expire, or be given to some stranger, as the reward of public service, to pass at his death to some other stranger. That such were the apprehensions of some nobles at home, while the thing was actually done in France, there can be no doubt; nor ought there to be much wonder.

The new electoral law, the French Reform Bill, was the most important subject of all that had occurred since the days of July. The number of electors to the Chamber of Deputies had hitherto been about 94,000 for the whole kingdom; and their qualification had consisted in the payment of yearly taxes to the amount of 300 francs (12*l.*). The ministers proposed to double the number, taking the electors from the largest tax-payers. The project was not approved; and, after much debate, the Bill that was carried provided a constituency somewhat exceeding 200,000, in a population of 30,000,000; the qualification being lowered to the payment of 9*l.* per annum in taxes. That a constituency so small should have satisfied a people who had achieved a revolution for the sake of it, indicates that the principle of a representative system of government was little understood as yet in France. There was one, however, who understood it but too well; and that was the King. He now sanctioned the law; and, from this first year of his reign to its last day, he was employed in virtually narrowing the constituency, and extending his own power over it by means of patronage, till, in the imminent peril that the representation would become as mere a mockery as in the time of his predecessor, his strong hand of power was snatched away from the institution which he had grasped for his own purposes. In 1831, however, he accepted the new electoral law, and congratulated his people on the enlargement of their representative rights.

Nothing in the record of this period is more interesting to us

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1831, p. 333.

now than to read the declarations on the principles of the politics of the day made by two men, conspicuous in that and in a later revolution,—the King and M. Guizot. M. Guizot was a member of the King's first Administration, and of his last. We find on record the opinions of both, in this first year of the revolution, on the character of the two great parties,—of the movement and of resistance. On the opening of the new Chamber in July of this year, M. Guizot declared himself to be, where it was the business of the government to be, between these two parties. After declaring that the resistance—the conservative—party would be gradually won upon by the blessings of good government, he said to the Chamber:¹ “The other is the party that you have to deal with. That party, which I will not call the republican, but the bad revolutionary party, weakened and exhausted, is at this time, thank God, incapable of repentance and amendment. The revolution of July is all that there was good, sound, and national in our first revolution; and the whole converted into a government. This is the struggle which you have to maintain, between the revolution of July,—that is, between all that is good, sound, and national, from 1789 to 1830; and the bad revolutionary party,—that is, the rump of our first revolution, or all that there was of bad, unsound, and anti-national, from 1789 to 1830.” The King, in a speech in answer to a provincial address, in the early part of the year, had given his view of this matter, in terms familiar at this day to all who have ears:² “We endeavor to preserve the just medium (*juste milieu*), equally distant from the excesses of popular power on the one hand, and the abuses of royal power on the other.” This phrase, *un juste milieu*, thus creditable in its origin, became discredited by subsequent events. It was from this moment indissolubly associated with the policy of the King and his Cabinet; and it presently came to share their disgraces. After having for years heard it used as the nickname of a tampering and hypocritical despotism, it is interesting to revert to the origin of this familiar term.

From this time a cursory view of the politics of France presents little but a painful spectacle of a disguised conflict between the King and his people. In 1832, the King began his prosecutions of the press, which were carried on for the rest of his reign to such an extent as makes the historical reader wonder that they were endured so long as they were. It was not only that newspapers were watched over and punished for their political articles, but that paragraphs in ridicule or censure of the King himself were laid hold of, and the authors subjected to cruel imprisonment. It required no small courage to brave

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1831, p. 242. ² *Annuaire Historique*, 1831, p. 54.

such hatred as the King incurred, when, for a libel against himself, he snatched a young man from his bride and his home, and shut him up for a term of years, — the victim fainting three times while his head was shaved on his entering his prison after sentence. When such punishments were inflicted by tens, by fifties, the King could not expect to be beloved, even by those to whom the name of public order was most sacred. And he showed no sign of a desire to be beloved, but only to preserve order by the means which seemed to him best. The excuse of his libellers was, that he merged his function of King in that of Minister; that he did not reign, but govern; and that he had therefore no right to complain of the same amount of criticism and comment which would be put up with by any one of his ministers. He chose, however, to be both Minister and King; and he compelled others, as well as himself, to take the consequences. Within three years of the accession of Louis Philippe, the number of prosecutions of the press on the part of the government was 411.¹ Out of this number, there were 143 condemnations. This was not exactly the method of government that the nation had hoped to obtain by their revolution; but they bore with more than could previously have been expected. They were weary of changes and tumults, and thankful to be spared the expense and burden of war. In the hope that the resources of the country would improve under a peace-policy, like that of Louis Philippe, the great middle classes of France were willing to bear with much, in order to gain time, and wait for natural change. The discontents of the injured, therefore, showed themselves in acts without concert, — in attacks on the King's life, and libels against his character; and in occasional insurrections. Among the most formidable of these were two in 1832, — one in Paris, on occasion of the funeral of General Lamarque, and supposed to be the work of the republican party; and the other in La Vendée, for the purpose of restoring the old branch of the Bourbons in the person of the Duc de Bourdeaux, whose mother conducted the insurrection. During the revolt in Paris, the capital was declared in a state of siege; on the legality of which there were endless discussions afterwards, — hurtful to the influence of the government. The provincial insurrection was put down, and the Duchess de Berri taken prisoner. The affair ended in a manner most mortifying to the exiled family, and ludicrous in all other eyes. The devoted mother, the widow of the murdered prince, the pathetic symbol in her own person of the woes of the banished line, gave birth to an infant in prison, and was thereby compelled to avow a private marriage in Italy. Everybody

Insurrec-
tions.

¹ Annual Register, 1833, p. 243 (note).

laughed at this proof of a divided devotion, and the heroine was allowed, on her recovery, to go where she would.¹ She did not go to Holyrood, to meet the reproaches of the sufferers whom she had made ridiculous.

It was after these revolts that the vigilant among the French patriots observed with uneasiness the stealthy progress of measures for fortifying Paris. Strong works were rising in commanding positions round the capital; and, when inquiry was made, the name of Napoleon was put forth by Marshal Soult. Napoleon had resolved to fortify Paris, and had fixed on these very positions. But then, it was answered, that was during the hundred days, when he had reason to apprehend attacks from all the world. France was not now in apparent danger of invasion from any quarter; and the vigilant intimated their suspicion, that these fortifications were intended to be held, not for, but against Paris. In 1833, the Minister required from the Chamber, when he brought in his budget, a grant of 2,000,000 francs (above 83,000*l.*) for carrying on the works.² The deputies protested against a series of detached forts; and demanded that, if there were any fortifications at all, they should be in the form of circuit-walls, which might be manned, against a foreign enemy, by the National Guard or the citizens. The government held to its right to fortify the towns of the kingdom in its own way, without being called to account about the method; and the Chamber refused the amount by a large majority. The works, however, proceeded; the vigilance of the citizens increased; there was reason to apprehend a forcible demolition of these works, — raised by invisible funds; and at length the workmen were dismissed, and all was quiet for a time.

In the affairs of government, however, there was no quiet. There were several changes of Ministry during the year 1834; *more suppression of journals and political societies; more riots in Paris and Lyons*; and, at one time, some danger of a war with the United States, about a money-claim which France at last hastened to satisfy, to avoid war. The king made more and more advances towards being the sole ruler of the country, with mere servants under him in the name of ministers. The substantial middle class grew more and more afraid of disturbance, the longer they enjoyed the blessings of external order. They escaped the qualms of a consciousness of their having bartered freedom for quiet, by endeavoring, as much as possible, to avoid the whole subject of politics. Those who felt the despotism in their consciences, intellects, and affections, became disheartened under this apathy and contentedness of

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1833, p. 270. ² *Annuaire Historique*, 1833, p. 284.

the middle classes, and stirred less and less under the incubus. It was no wonder that the King himself, and large classes of his people, and almost all foreigners, believed that his system was completely succeeding; that he had found out the way to govern the French; and that his reign would be memorable in history as the close of a long period of disturbance, — memorable for its strengthening success from the beginning onwards, and for its peaceful close. Yet there were men in England at that date, — sensible and moderate men, — who said that Louis Philippe might possibly, though not probably, die a king; but that, if he did, he would be the last; and that no son of his would ever be King of the French. At the close of this period, however, he seems himself to have been satisfied with his progress, and sincerely believing that he was doing what was best for the people under his care. By a rapid and perpetual extension of functionarism, — by planting officials all over the country to do the work of central departments seated in Paris, — he was casting a net over France, by means of which he could draw the representation into his own hands, and govern with ever-improving unity of plan, — still and always for the nation's own good. Thus it seems to have been with France at the close of 1834.

In the course of this year, a silent censor was removed, — a witness of old times whose presence was a perpetual rebuke to a citizen-king engaged in fortifying Paris. Lafayette died in May, and was laid in the ground without commotion, — owing partly to the strong force of soldiery sent to the spot on the pretext of military honors to the deceased, and partly to the timidity and apathy which had grown on the middle classes. A vast multitude, orderly and silent, attended the funeral; and there was no discourse at the grave. It was left to other countries to pronounce his funeral discourse; and it was done, as by one impulse, by all whom he had assisted to political freedom, from the western boundaries of America to the depths of Germany. The reputation of Lafayette, both in its nature and extent, is as striking a tribute to virtue as can be furnished by any age. In him were collected all virtues but those which require high intellectual power for their development; and he was at least as much adored as any such idols of the time as had more intellectual power and less virtue. It was a misfortune to the world that his magnanimity had not as much of strength as it had of purity; for he was repeatedly placed in those critical positions when an individual will, put forth at a moment's warning, decides the destiny of a nation. On such occasions, he showed himself weak; and, through the same irresolution, such services as he rendered to his country were of a somewhat desultory nature, and seldom fully successful. But the love in which he was held

Death of
Lafayette.

showed that, for once, a man was estimated by the true rule,—by what he was, and not by what he did. He could not achieve great enterprises; but he could meet danger anywhere, endure loathsome imprisonment at Olmütz, protest against wrong in the French Convention, fight under Washington for American independence, decline the headship of the Republic in France, in order to put the crown on the head of Louis Philippe; and, when he found that he had therein committed an error, retire to his farm, to end his life in humility and silence. He could pass through a life of seventy-six years without showing a sign of selfish ambition, or any other kind of cupidity. He traversed a purgatory of human passions without a singe from any flame, or a single flutter of fear in his heart,—the angel of compassion walking with him as his guard in that furnace. His goodness so clothes his whole image to men's eyes, that they forget his rank, and do not inquire for his talents; and, in our age and state of society, this is the strongest possible testimony to the nobleness of his character. Lafayette was born of a noble family in Auvergne, in 1757, and early married a lady of rank equal to his own. He died, in his seventy-seventh year, on the 20th of May, 1834.¹

At the very first revolutionary stir in Europe, Belgium began to move. The arbitrary union of Holland and Belgium had never answered; and Belgium was now bent on its being dissolved. ^{Separation of Belgium and Holland.} There was no power of compulsion existing which could enforce a longer union against the will of a nation, however small, which was unanimous in a desire to live by itself, and after its own manner; so, after much marching and countermarching of the Prince of Orange and his troops, and the rising of an insurgent army, and messages from the king, and consultations of the States-general, and a grand concluding bombardment of Antwerp, which called in the allies to interfere, the independence of Belgium was declared at Brussels, in November, 1830; a monarchical government was decided on, and a vote of exclusion passed against the House of Orange. The Dutch people showed no particular reluctance to the separation; and there was therefore nothing to be done but to give up Antwerp to the Belgians, and leave them to settle their own affairs. It is somewhat amusing at this day to the English traveller to hear at Rotterdam the carping statements of Dutch merchants, and to witness their eagerness to disparage the trade of Antwerp; and at Antwerp to see the efforts made to exhibit its small commerce to the best advantage. It is, on a large scale, the spectacle of a village shop-partnership dissolved in a quarrel, where each party keeps a watch over his neighbor's

¹ *Annuaire Historique*, 1834, p. 253.

custom, and is sure he cannot live by it, while neither wishes that the two concerns should come together again. The rest of the world hopes that there may be business enough for both; and, in the separation of Holland and Belgium, both had the good wishes of England. The Dutch heir-apparent had been educated by an English archbishop, and had been a suitor for the hand of the Princess Charlotte, — a suitor refused only by herself, and not from any ill-will in other quarters; and the prince finally chosen by the Belgians to be their new king was the husband of the Princess Charlotte, and the uncle of the presumptive heiress of the British throne. Thus was England in amity with both countries when Prince Leopold became King of the Belgians. There was trouble for some time afterwards, from the difficulty that was naturally found in bringing the Dutch government to acquiesce in the new arrangements, and from some fear that France and England might have to sustain the cause of Belgium against Holland, supported by the other Allied Powers. It was by French arms at last that the citadel of Antwerp was compelled to evacuate its Dutch garrison. France was by this time closely united to the interests of Belgium. The King of the French refused the sovereignty for his son, the Duke de Nemours, to whom it was offered at the beginning of the struggle; but he gave his eldest daughter to share the throne of Belgium with Leopold, the marriage taking place in the autumn of 1832.

It was in the autumn of 1830, that the little Duchy of Brunswick threw off the annoyance of its turbulent young ruler. By advice of the British and other sovereigns, the brother of the absconding Duke assumed his place and government, according to the invitation of his subjects. In Saxony, the cry for various reforms was so strong that the

King, an indolent devotee, associated his nephew with him in the government, as joint-regent; the young man's father, Duke Maximilian, passing over in his favor his own right of succession to the throne. Duke Frederick Augustus thus became the virtual ruler of Saxony. In Hesse Cassel, the people were up, demanding and obtaining a constitution. There was a dispute about the succession at Baden.

In Switzerland, the governments of the respective cantons, threatened by the stir within and beyond their country, hastened to propitiate popular feeling by a reform of abuses, and amelioration of institutions, and a grant of stronger guarantees of liberty. In the next year, there were insurrections in several of the Italian States; but the troops of Austria marched down, presently restored order, and precluded all ameliorations in the

Prince Leopold accepts the Belgian Crown.

Brunswick.

Saxony.

Hesse Cassel.

Baden.

Switzerland.

Italy.

government. In Spain, the King died in 1833, of apoplexy, occasioned by over-eating. His little daughter, then ^{Spain. Death} three years old, was declared queen, under the regency ^{of the King.} of her mother,—that Christina of whom France and England have since had occasion to know so much. These two governments were the first to acknowledge the young Queen of Spain. The other governments of Europe kept aloof till it could be seen what would become of Don Carlos, the pretender, who had now been driven from the soil of Spain, and had ^{Don Carlos.} taken refuge in Portugal. This pretender was, for a course of years after this, of some consequence to England; for he served as a last refuge for the sympathies and hopes of the extreme Tories, when disappointed of all that they desired and hoped at home. It is necessary for such sympathies, and for that royalist imagination which has in it much that is venerable and beautiful, to have some object on which to exercise themselves; and the world is seldom without some fugitive prince, devoutly persuaded of his own right to some throne, who leads brave men with him, and is cheered on by romantic admirers from afar. There were now no more Stuarts; and Don Miguel, of Portugal, was too bad even for romance to advocate; but here was Don Carlos of Spain, whose case actually bore a dispute, who had lived among mountain fastnesses, and was now in exile, but likely to return; and here was the Whig Administration espousing without hesitation, and in conjunction with revolutionary France, the cause of the infant Queen, and hastening to acknowledge her sovereignty. It was no wonder that a Peer here and there, and a few rich commoners, seeing all going to wreck at home in the passage of the Reform Bill, retired to their estates, and there studied the map of Spain, and thence wrote to the Spanish pretender accounts of the progress of revolution in England, and offers of sympathy, service, and hospitality, in case of need. In Portugal, Don Pedro conducted the war against his guilty ^{Portugal.} brother in person,—amidst much hardship and many reverses, till, in 1834, having been assisted by British ships and a Spanish army, he drove the usurper from the peninsula, assembled the Cortes, was appointed to the regency on the 28th of August, and died on the 22d of September. Two ^{Death of Don Pedro.} days before his death, the Queen was declared of age by a decree of the Cortes, who feared to commit the powers of government to any other hand. Some steps had been already taken in regard to her marriage, and on the 1st of December she married the Duke de Leuchtenberg, the son of Eugene Beauharnois, and already a family connection by marriage. ^{Marriage of the Queen of Portugal.} The union seemed to promise well, as far as the character of the young man was concerned; but it was

presently dissolved. The marriage had taken place by proxy; the Prince arrived in Portugal in February, and in March died of sore throat, occasioned by cold.

These events in the west of Europe were interesting; but less so than that what was going on in the east. The Pacha of Egypt was acquiring the possessions of Turkey almost as fast as his forces could march over them. Under the command of his adopted son and avowed heir, Ibrahim Pacha, his army had taken possession of the whole of Syria, — perhaps not much to the discontent of the Syrians themselves, — and, by the end of 1832, the Egyptian general had passed the Taurus, on his way to Constantinople. The abasement of Turkey was extreme. It was this Egyptian vassal whose aid had supported her in her struggle with the three Powers; and now what could she do but appeal to Russia for assistance against her own vassal? The next year, she did so appeal, to the great annoyance of France and England, whose object was to keep Turkey out of the grasp of Russia. Mohammed Ali was remonstrated with; and he showed great moderation in the midst of some anger. He had made war only when the Porte had interfered with what he considered his right to conduct a quarrel of his own with a brother-vassal, — the governor of Acre. He made no difficulty about stopping the march of his army; but, before Ibrahim turned back, he had obtained from the Porte all that he chose to demand. Early in the summer of 1833, Mohammed Ali found himself master of all the provinces from the borders of Asia Minor to the unknown retreats of the infant Nile; and he had himself learned, and had shown the world, how easy it was to march upon Constantinople, and knock at the doors of the sultan's seraglio. It was of his own free pleasure that Ibrahim turned back now. He was soon seen in every part of the Syria he had won for his father, taking barbarous vengeance on his enemies, when so inclined; but, at the same time, building hospitals, repairing mosques, promoting agriculture, taking an interest in manufactures, and everywhere securing, with the whole force of his authority, toleration and good treatment of the Christians.

Russia had answered promptly and gladly to the appeal of the Porte for protection; but she had some engrossing affairs on her hands elsewhere. It was during the revolutionary autumn of 1830, — that season of political earthquake, — that the oppressions of the Russian Grand-Duke Constantine at Warsaw became so intolerable, that it may be questioned whether they would not have produced the same results, whether the rest of Europe were on the stir or in a dead sleep. Some students of the military school had drunk to the

Poland.

memory of Kosciuszko, and other heroes. The Grand-Duke caused two successive commissions to sit on this offence; and the decision being, in each case, that there was no ground for punishment, the Grand-Duke took the affair into his own hands, and, without warrant of law, ordered some of the youths to be flogged, and others imprisoned. The young men rose; the Polish part of the garrison joined them; and then ^{Revolt.} the towns-people began to act. They helped themselves with arms from the arsenal, and aided in driving out the Russian soldiery, amidst fearful bloodshed, from the streets of Warsaw. It was on the 29th of November that the students rose; and, on the 3d of December, Constantine was travelling towards the frontier, having recommended all establishments, persons, and property, to the protection of the Polish nation.

In this short interval, six Polish nobles had taken the place of some obnoxious members in the administrative council, and had presented to the Grand-Duke their propositions for various reforms, and their demand for the fulfilment of the constitution. Every thing was still done in the name of the Emperor. When Constantine set out on his journey home, it was thought at Warsaw so doubtful how the Emperor would receive the tidings of what had happened, that it would be as well ^{Suspense.} to provide for defence, if he should be very angry. The Poles did not yet know Nicholas, and the character and power of his wrath. The day was coming when fierce torture of the heart and mind was to show what it was. It was nothing uncommon to be forming and exercising a force, as the Poles now were. They were a military people, and their organization had been kept up by Russia. The worst feature in their case was the absence of any port. They had no command of the sea, either for the arrival of aid, or for facility of escape. At the close of the year, their prospect was an anxious one. If Russia should be incensed, Prussia and Austria would join her to put down the nuisance of Poland. But the die was cast. News must soon arrive. Meantime, the commander-in-chief, Klopicki, was made dictator, in case of its being necessary to prosecute the rebellion. It was necessary. The first news from St. Petersburg was, that the Emperor promised to inflict signal vengeance for the "horrid treason" of the Poles.

And the Emperor kept his word. At the beginning of the year 1831, his wrath was announced to the Polish nation; and at the beginning of February, his armies ^{Struggle.} began to pass over the frontier. When it had become clear that Poland must declare for independence, the dictatorship had been exchanged for a council of state, consisting of a few of the most eminent patriots. Before the end of the year, all was over; the

constitution of Poland was withdrawn; she was declared "an integral part of Russia;" her nobles were on the way to Siberia; her high-born ladies were delivered over for wives to the common soldiers on the frontier; her tenderly reared infants were carried away in wagon-loads to be made Russians, and trained to worship the Czar. The Polish law was abolished; the Polish language was prohibited; and the Emperor uttered his declaration to listening Europe, "Order reigns in Warsaw."

The spectacle of the conflict had been one of intense interest to the world outside. The struggle had been a brave, an able, and, under the circumstances, a long one; and there were times when the most anxious observers had some hope that the Poles might succeed. The word "hope" may be used here without reserve, because the sympathy was almost all on one side. The highest conservatives might and did sympathize with the Polish rebels; for there were no higher conservatives in the world than these Polish rebels themselves. If their deep-rooted conservatism, their intensely aristocratic spirit, had been understood by the Liberals of Europe and America from the beginning, there would, perhaps, have been less sympathy in their efforts, and certainly less hope of their success. It was not till long afterwards that the discovery was made that the Poles had been fighting, — for nationality, it is true, — but not for national freedom; that they had not the remotest idea of giving any liberty to the middle and lower classes of their people; and that they carried their proud oligarchical spirit with them into the mines of Siberia, the drawing-rooms of London and Paris, and the retreats of the Mississippi valley. This is not mentioned as a matter of censure, but of plain fact, which it is necessary to know, in order to the understanding of their case. They strove for all that they understood; and they did, for the rescue of their nationality, all that bravery and devotedness could do. To contend for popular freedom was another kind of enterprise, of which they had no conception; and for not understanding which, therefore, they cannot be blamed. But it is to this inability that their utter destruction is now, at last, seen or believed to be owing. They themselves impute their latter disasters to dissensions among themselves; and there were dissensions enough to account for any degree of failure. But it also seems clear that their cause was doomed from the beginning, from the absence of any basis of popular sympathy. The great masses were indifferent, or rather disposed in favor of Russian than of Polish rule. They did not know that they should be better off under a change, and they might be worse; so they let the armies pass their fields, and scarcely looked up as they went by. No cause could pros-

per under such a dead-weight as this. This view, now generally taken, is borne out by the impressions left by the exiles in the countries where they have taken refuge. Everywhere, all homes, all hearts, all purses, have been open to them, — for hard and narrow must be the hearts and homes that would not welcome and receive strangers so cruelly afflicted, and so insufferably oppressed; and everywhere the impression left seems to be the same, — that the Poles undertook an enterprise for which they were not morally prepared. They could sacrifice their lives and fortunes; and they could fight bravely and most skilfully for any cause to which they would give the lustre of their arms. But something more than these things, fine as they are, is required to entitle men to the honor of the last contention for nationality: and humble industry must be united to the magnanimous courage of the battle-field; aristocratic pride must be laid down when its insignia are thrown into the common cause; and the most intense hatred of tyranny is an insufficient qualification, if it be not accompanied by an answering enthusiasm for human liberties wherever there are human hearts to be ennobled by the aspiration. Many of the Polish exiles have caught something of this enthusiasm in the countries over which they have been scattered by their revolution; but it does not appear to have been the moving force of their struggle for nationality in 1831.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE accession of William IV. was really enjoyed by his people, as affording exercise to their loyal feelings, and giving them the opportunity, so dear to Englishmen, of talking about royal doings, and obtaining an occasional glimpse of regality itself. Through the illness of George III., and the morbid fancies of his successor, royalty had for many years lived so retired as to be known only in its burdens and its perplexities. Now it came forth again, not only on Windsor Terrace, but into the very streets, and sometimes on foot, — with friendly face and cordial manners. Amusing stories — amusing to most people, but shocking to Lord Eldon — were soon abroad of the curious liberties taken by forward and zealous people, in their delight at finding themselves not afraid of royalty. On one of the first occasions of their Majesties' going to the theatre in state, there was an exhibition of placards in gallery and pit, evidently by concert, — placards bearing the words "Reform" and "Glorious King."¹ At a word from a policeman, the placards were withdrawn; but here was a "revolutionary symptom" for the timid to exercise their apprehensions upon. The coronation, which took place on the 8th of September, 1831, was a quiet affair, befitting the accession of a sovereign who was humbly and reasonably aware that his reign must be short, and undistinguished by any energetic personal action.² There was no banquet, and the royal procession returned through the streets at three o'clock. The King and his ministers gave great dinners at home, and London was illuminated in the evening. There was one person, present in all minds, who was absent from the ceremony, — she who was, in all probability, to fill the principal place at the next. It was given out that the state of the Princess Victoria's health made it desirable that she should remain in retirement in the Isle of Wight; and perhaps it was best, considering her tender age and her peculiar position, that she should. She was only twelve years old; and, if certain authorities are to be trusted, had only

¹ Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 46.

² Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 140.

within a year become fully aware that a regal destiny was before her.

It was now time that overt preparation for that destiny should be made, if it was to be done, as it ought to be done, gradually. In the next year, we see her beginning a series of tours, wherein were embraced all the good objects of health, of her becoming acquainted with the principal institutions, monuments, and scenes of the country of which she was to be sovereign, and of her being inured to move in public. In 1831, the journey comprehended the singular old city of Chester, several cathedrals, some noblemen's seats, where the royal party were entertained, and ending with the University of Oxford. During these tours, the young princess, who at home was wont to walk out in thick shoes and a warm cloak, in all weathers, on a common or through fields and lanes, was familiarized with the gaze of a multitude, and with processions, addresses, and observances, such as she must hereafter be accustomed to for her whole life. The management was good; and we may suppose the recreation was pleasant, for it has been kept up. Of all royal recreations, there can be none more unquestionably good than that of an annual tour. If there is more dulness and constraint, and less intellectual freedom and stir, in royal life than in any other, this is a natural safeguard and remedy, as far as it goes. A large accession of ideas must accrue from annual travel; and there is no other method by which the distance between sovereign and people can be so much and so naturally diminished as by the sovereign going forth from the palace among universities and towns and villages, and scattered dwellers on wild heaths and the sea-shore. To those that hope that the practice and its pleasures may be renewed for many, many years, it is interesting to mark its formal beginning, in the autumn of 1832.

Amidst all the alarms talked about by the anti-reformers during the "revolutionary period" under our notice, there was less danger and even disrespect to majesty than ^{Assault on the King.} has been common in much quieter times. It was impossible for a sovereign to incur the consequences of a change of mind about a course of policy to which he stood pledged, without suffering more or less; but William IV. was gently dealt with, considering the circumstances. The utmost suspicion could not make out that his life was in danger from political discontents; and, on the two occasions when his life was threatened, the ill-conditioned wretches who threw the stone and wrote the letter gave their private wrongs and wants as their excuse.¹ On the first occasion, a depraved old pensioner, five times turned out of Greenwich Hospital for misconduct, thought he "would have a shy at

¹ Annual Register, 1832, Chron. p. 76; 1833, Chron. p. 27.

the King," and put stones in his pocket for the purpose. At the first "sly," he struck the King on the forehead, as His Majesty was looking out of the window at Ascot races. But that he wore his hat, the King might have been seriously hurt. As it was, he was somewhat stunned, but presented himself again at the window before there was time for alarm. Though this happened at so critical a season as June, 1832, it was impossible for the most ingenious alarmist to connect it with politics.

There is little in this period to yield comfort as to the state of popular enlightenment. The proceedings of the Dorsetshire laborers were marked by an astonishing barbarism. In introducing agricultural laborers into their union, they used death's-heads, and hobgoblin mysteries, the very mention of which carries back the imagination five hundred years.

During the years 1831 and 1832, we find records of enclosure riots, of a formidable kind. In one place, the poor people fancied that fencing in boggy land was against the law altogether; and, in another, that the law expired in twenty-one years from the first enclosure in 1808; and, in both these instances, the levelling of fences went on, night after night, till nothing was left; and the soldiers were pelted, and exasperated proprietors were wounded, and a world of mischief done, because the poor people knew no better than to suppose they were struggling for their rights. Then we have more combination horrors, — more ferocity towards capitalists, and tyranny over operatives, exercised by a very few worthless meddlers, who feasted on the earnings of the honest but unenlightened men whom they made their tools. We find the leaders of strikes cutting pieces out of the looms, and thrashing and stabbing men who were content with their wages, and only anxious to be left free to maintain their families by their own industry. One of the most formidable riots of the time took place on the day appointed for a general fast, on account of the cholera, — the 21st of March, 1832.¹ An ignorant and violent association, which called itself the Political Union of the Working-classes, and which subsisted for only a short time, failing in all its aims, raised a fearful mob-power by offering to feed the hungry with bread and meat in Finsbury Square, instead of observing the fast. Alarmed at their prospect when it was too late, they failed to appear; and no bread and meat were forthcoming. It is said that the assemblage of the hungry that day — amidst a season of deep distress — was enough to appal the stoutest heart. The emaciated frames and haggard faces were sad to see; but far worse was the wrath in their eyes at the mockery, as they conceived it, of an order to fast to avert the cholera, when here were above 20,000 poor

¹ Annual Register, 1832, Chron. p. 40.

creatures in danger of cholera from fasting, and other evils of destitution. As their wrath and their hunger increased, and the women among them grew excited, conflicts with the police began; and before the multitude were dispersed to their wretched lurking-places, more hungry than they came, there had been some severe fighting. More than twenty of the police were wounded, and many of the crowd. The incitements to rick-burning, machine-breaking, and seizure of corn, addressed to the agricultural population in 1831 by Carlile and Cobbett, were so gross as would not have been dreamed of in any country where the barbarous ignorance of the rural laborers might not be confidently reckoned on. Whether it was wise in the government to prosecute these two profligate writers, affording thereby an effectual advertisement of their sedition, may be a question; but the trials stand out as an exposition of the popular barbarism, and the low demagoguism of the time.¹ The murders for the sake of selling bodies for dissection did not cease after the re-
 Anatomy
 Bill.
 tribution on Burke and Hare, but rather increased, — as it is usual for fantastic or ferocious crimes to do, while the public mind is strongly excited about them. The disappearance and proved murder of Italian boys and other homeless and defenceless beings, was hastening the day when the law should be so altered as to permit anatomy to find its own resources in a legal and recognized manner; and the settlement of the matter was further accelerated by an incident which fixed a good deal of attention in 1832. A woman who knew herself to be likely to die, and believed that her disease was an unusual one, desired her brother to deliver over her corpse to a public hospital, and to spend in charity what her funeral would have cost. The brother obeyed the directions. As it appeared that the law rendered interment necessary, the remains were buried from the hospital. The brother was brought before the Hatton Garden magistrate, under a vague notion of his having done something shocking and illegal. On a full hearing, on a subsequent day, it appeared that he and the officers of the hospital were entirely blameless; the magistrate closing the business by informing the prisoner, “that he had not violated the laws of the country, but, on the other hand, had acted in strict accordance with them.” As far as the public were concerned, the sister’s memory was not left without its share of admiring gratitude.² In the next session, Mr. Warburton introduced and carried a Bill, by which the provision for the dissection of bodies of murderers was repealed, and the association of disgrace with dissection thereby extinguished; and by which facilities were offered for anatomists to avail them-

¹ Annual Register, 1831, Chron. pp. 18, 95.

² 2 and 3 Will. IV., c. 84, 3d August, 1833.

selves of the wish or permission of dying persons and survivors, while abuse was excluded by a machinery of certificates and registration.

By this time, the imperfect character of medical education was beginning to be seen and admitted; and, in 1830, we find great improvements in course of introduction by the Society of Apothecaries' Hall, and prescribed to students as regulations.¹ In 1828, the student was not obliged to attend more than six courses of lectures; in 1829, it must be ten courses; in 1830, fourteen. There must be more hospital practice, and a more extended examination, before candidates could be admitted to the profession. The subject of medical qualification was kept painfully before the public mind, in this and two succeeding years, by the results of the quack practice of a young man, once a portrait-painter, named St. John Long, who believed that he had discovered an infallible ointment, and method of treating the sores that it caused. While mourning over the ignorance of the populace, we must not lose sight of that of the educated classes, as they are called. Long's patients were of the moneyed classes, — and his rooms were besieged by ladies and gentlemen who supposed that one particular ointment would cure all their various complaints: they adhered to their young doctor, in the face of all the deaths that were taking place under his treatment; and, when he died in 1834, the "secret" of his ointment was sold for several thousand pounds. In September, 1830, an inquest was held on the body of a young lady who was one of the victims of his quackery; and, in consequence of the verdict, Long was brought to trial, and convicted of manslaughter. Not the less for this do we find him, the next February, on his trial again for the death of a healthy person, who had applied to him on account of a slight and common ailment, and who died in torture, under his treatment, in a month's time. On this trial the fact came out that Long was making 12,000*l.* a year. His plea in the present case was the malice of his enemies, by which he was kept away from his patient in her last moments, when he should have recovered her. The jury, evidently not enlightened enough to see the ignorance shown in the principle of Long's practice, and naturally impressed by the array of gentry of "the highest respectability," who came forward to vindicate his qualifications, returned, after some delay, a verdict of Not Guilty; whereupon "several elegantly dressed ladies went to the prisoner, and shook him cordially by the hand."² The young man, who may have believed in his own specific, had only three years more in which to torture his patients, and let their flatteries and

¹ Annual Register, 1830, Chron. p. 151.

² Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 38.

their guineas flow in upon him; but the spirit of quackery did not die with him, nor the propensity to it in his admirers, — the ignorant of the “educated classes.” Just at the time when Long was laid in his grave, an innkeeper at York was sentenced to six months’ imprisonment for manslaughter of an invalid, by administering the Morrison’s Pills which have since sent so many to the churchyard before their time. The thing wanted, evidently, is such an advance of physiological and medical knowledge as shall exalt that knowledge into real science. While the best medical practice is yet but empirical, there will be unqualified as well as educated empirics; and portrait-painters and innkeepers, if they can but lay hold of a specific, may number their patients by thousands.

In the midst of the incendiarism of the Carliles and Cobbetts of the time, the popular respect for and trust in the law was enhanced by some incidents, otherwise purely Criminal trials. painful, wherein justice was made to visit persons of “property and standing,” as if they had had neither property nor standing. The never-ceasing and too just complaint, that the friendless and over-tempted are punished with hardness and indifference, while the well-friended and educated, whose intelligence aggravates their offences, are, somehow or other, almost always let off, had been prevalent, as usual, when Captain Moir — “William Moir, gentleman” — was tried in 1830, for the murder of a man whom he had shot, for trespass, very wantonly, and after repeated threats of mischief to his victim.¹ Captain Moir was hanged, as simply as his victim would have been if the act of aggression had been reversed. In the same year, a lady was convicted for shop-lifting, who actually carried on her person, at the moment of the theft, the sum of 8000*l.* in bank-notes and India bonds. She underwent her punishment.² In this case, if insanity existed, it must have been proved. All parties would have been too happy to admit the plea. It was no doubt one of those cases of strong propensity for which neither our education, law, nor justice makes provision. It is a case which makes the heart bleed; but if such are not allowed for among the poor, who have so little advantage of discipline, they cannot be among the rich, whose sin is in outrage of all restraining influences. The wretched woman of wealth suffered as if she had been a hungry mother, snatching a loaf for famishing children at home. In the next year, a Scotch clergyman, “minister of a Gothic chapel in Edinburgh, in high repute for his evangelical preaching,” was tried on an extensive indictment for book-stealing, found guilty of eleven acts of theft, and transported for fourteen years.³ To set against these

¹ Annual Register, 1830, law-case 350.

² Annual Register, 1830, Chron. p. 158.

³ Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 79.

acts of justice, — in common phrase, — were a few which went as far to weaken popular trust in the law as these to strengthen it.¹ In a very gross case of shoplifting in the autumn of 1832, by “two young ladies of high respectability,” there was such collusion as caused the escape of the culprits: the father was forewarned of the warrant, “that he might not be taken by surprise;” and so much time was given that the minds of all the prosecuting parties had changed, and no one would attempt to identify the thieves. Far worse, however, were two cases which happened near together, of erroneous verdicts and hasty sentences, — cases so gross as must have made all the poor in the neighborhood believe that a criminal trial was a sort of lottery, as they had long concluded the punishment of transportation to be. A man was convicted at Salisbury of threatening a neighbor by letter with a fire on his farm; the judge telling him with severity, that his crime was certainly not mitigated by his denial after such evidence, — “evidence which must satisfy every reasonable man,”² — and passing upon him a sentence of transportation for life. Presently, the prisoner’s son came forward, and owned himself the writer of the letter, of which his father had no knowledge whatever. As more letters had been sent to neighbors, the sentenced man was tried on another accusation, which enabled him to bring forward the new evidence of his innocence. He was “pardoned,” as the insulting phrase is; and the son, a mere youth, transported for seven years. The other case occurred only a few weeks afterwards, and was a very serious one. A receiver of stolen goods was convicted of having stolen them by an act of burglary, and sentenced to death, from which he was saved only by great exertions.³ It was the manifest insufficiency of the evidence which occasioned the efforts of those who saved him; and the whole affair was a disgrace. While such a transaction as this was stimulating the growing disapprobation of capital punishments, on the ground of the tremendous risk to the innocent which they involve, the worthy magistrates of Inverness were taking another ground, in an application to the Lord Advocate. They exhibited their case: that they had discharged their executioner; and that they would be subjected to very serious expense, if a man at present in custody on a charge of murder should be sentenced to be hanged. If this memorial had but been made sufficiently public at the time, who knows but that the abolition of capital punishments might have been much hastened by a general discharge of executioners?

A Chinese advertisement was translated and sent to England at this time which excited a good deal of attention. The steamer

¹ Annual Register, 1832, Chron. p. 140.

² Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 11.

³ Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 65.

"King-fa," running between Canton and a northern port, carried cows, a surgeon, a band of music, and had rooms elegantly fitted up for opium-smoking. It was now ^{Steam in the East.} clear that the eastern seas were to become steam-highways; and it was time that the English were assuming the lead, in this as in other enterprises of world-wide interest. We find, therefore, trial made at Blackwall, in 1834, of an iron steamboat, to be used as a towing-vessel on the Ganges; and, in the same year, an application from the India merchants to government to establish a regular communication from Malta to Alexandria, in order to facilitate their correspondence with India. In the course of the negotiation, we find that a steamer or a man-of-war was sent from Bombay up the Red Sea "about once a year;" and their Lordships of the Admiralty could not think of going to any expense, unless something more was done on the Bombay side. The face of things has changed in the Mediterranean and the eastern seas since that date.

A passion of admiration at the marvels and privileges of railway conveyance runs through the records of this period. ^{Conveyance of mails.} We are told of the coaches superseded, of the number of passengers and weight of parcels carried, — the speed, the ease, the safety; "but one fatal accident in eighteen months;" and of a railway opened between Leeds and Selby in 1834. A singularly interesting passage is found under the date 1832, in Mr. Babbage's "Economy of Machinery and Manufactures," wherein we see shadowed forth in one suggestion two of the mightiest enterprises of our time.¹ After indicating the vast increase which might be looked for in epistolary correspondence, if the time and cost of letter-carrying could be reduced, Mr. Babbage invites us to imagine a series of high pillars, erected at frequent intervals, as nearly as possible in a straight line, between two post-towns; a wire being carried from post to post, and so fixed as that it might be traversed by a tin cylinder which should carry the letters. The cylinder was to be moved by being attached to a smaller wire, — an endless wire, which would be wound round a drum by a man placed at each station. We have an anticipation of the convenience of two or three deliveries of letters per day in country places; of the vast increase of correspondence that would ensue, from the lessening of the cost of conveyance, both in money and time; an exposure of the clumsiness of the then existing method of conveying the mails; and a conception, remarkably expressed, of a possibility of shooting thought through long spaces by wires stretched above the roadside. "Nor is it impossible," concludes Mr. Babbage, "that the stretched wire might itself be available for a species of tele-

¹ First edition, p. 274, 275.

graphic communication yet more rapid." This was a near approach to the machinery, though not glancing at the principle, of the electric telegraph; and it would at that time have startled even Mr. Babbage's alert imagination to have known, that in fifteen years there would be established, in the broad territories of the United States, a means of communication so rapid as even to invert the order of time, to set at defiance the terrestrial conditions of space and duration; so that, by an electric telegraph between New York and Cincinnati, news is sent of an event which, happening at noon in the one place, is known at five minutes before noon at the other.

One use early made of the invention of waterproof cloth was for diving purposes.¹ In 1832, some expert divers at Yarmouth, the crew of a small cutter there, discovered for themselves, and to their great amazement, that they could carry enormous weights under water, almost without being sensible of them, and perform feats of what would be strength in an atmospheric medium, which they could themselves hardly believe. The diver went down in three dresses, the uppermost one being of India-rubber cloth, with a tube inserted at the back of the neck, through which air was pumped from above to meet the consumption by his lungs. The copper helmet he wore, with its three glass windows, pressed with a weight of 50 lbs. upon his shoulders; and he carried down in bags 120 lbs. of lead; yet he felt perfectly unencumbered as he walked under the green water, and leisurely surveyed the wreck which he had come to pillage. There he discovered that the large iron crow-bar which he took down with him — a tough instrument enough on board the cutter — could be bent by him, on board the wreck, till its ends met. By a set of signals, he obtained what he wanted from his comrades overhead; and, when they sent him down baskets, he returned them full of wine. A diver at Portsmouth was, during the same summer, exploring the wreck of the "Boyne," which had sunk thirty-seven years before. He was to deliver over the copper he found to the dockyard, and to keep every thing else. One part of his treasure was wine, — twenty-one bottles of port and claret, from the captain's store. As the bottles, crusted with large barnacles, came up from the deep, where they had lain for thirty-seven years, persons were eager to purchase; but the owner refused twenty shillings a bottle, which was offered on deck. The Portsmouth diver wore a lighter dress than the Yarmouth crew. When his simple leather hood and Mackintosh dress were seen, men of enterprise began to think of walking round the coasts of our islands, under the waves, to measure the inequalities of the submarine hills and valleys; picking up, as

¹ Annual Register, 1832, Chron. p. 108.

they roved over hill and dale in the dim green light, the treasures of the wrecks which lie strewn there, from the days of Julius Cæsar to our own time.

Before these adventurers descended into the depths, a philosopher had been on certain heights of our islands, ^{The Drummond light.} whence he had brought down a discovery which dazzled men's eyes, both literally and metaphorically. Lieutenant Drummond has since been known and honored in the world of politics; but when he became Lord Althorp's secretary, at the urgent desire of the whole cabinet, he said decidedly and repeatedly that his true vocation was the pursuit of physical science in connection with his profession, and that he should return to it after a certain term of service in political life. He did not live to return to the pursuit of science, but died worn out in devotedness to Ireland. Before accepting any political office, he was engaged in a trigonometrical survey in Ireland; and, being anxious to obtain as large a base for his triangle as possible, he pondered means of establishing signals between two distant mountain-summits. This desire led him to the discovery and use of the brightest light at that time ever known, — the Drummond light, as it was then called. It was obtained by directing a stream of oxygen, and another of hydrogen, under certain conditions, upon lime. The doubt was whether steadiness and permanence could be insured. No time was lost, however, in attempting practical applications of it to purposes the most vast and the most minute. We find records of trials of new lenses with this light, by which the mariner's star, the beacon, would brighten to an ever-increasing magnitude; and of microscopic application of a light penetrating enough to show the whole interior organization of a flea, and of animalcules of the ditch which presented themselves as transparent monsters of the deep.

Captain Ross and his comrades returned from the North Pole, and landed at Hull in 1833. They had discovered ^{Polar discoveries.} the Gulf of Boothia, and the continent and isthmus of Boothia Felix, and many islands, rivers, and lakes.¹ They brought home also a store of valuable observations, particularly on the magnet. What remained to be discovered in connection with the North-west Passage was now brought within such compass, that no one doubted that a few years would witness the completion of the survey.

In the last month of 1833, we find an announcement of an enterprise of a spirited individual, named Perkins, who had expended 100,000*l.* in erecting a cattle-market at ^{Islington cattle-market.} Islington, covering twenty-two acres of ground, and ready to receive 4000 beasts, 40,000 sheep, and calves and pigs

¹ Annual Register, 1833, Chron. p. 151.

in proportion. The projector, and many other persons, were simple enough to believe that the nuisance of Smithfield Market would now be abated; that there would soon be an end of the danger to passengers in London streets from over-driven cattle; and of the pollution of the cattle-market in a crowded district; and of the inevitable cruelty used towards the animals in a space so crowded and inconvenient; and of the badness of the meat, in consequence of the suffering condition of the animals. All this had been true for many years; and it had been represented again and again, and with great urgency, to Parliament: but the trustees of various trusts, the inhabitants of Smithfield, and the cattle-salesmen, had always hitherto been too strong to permit a change; and they have been so to this day.¹ It should not be forgotten, however, that, as early as 1833, an opportunity was afforded for abating the nuisance of Smithfield Market.

A new choir, of great beauty, was erected in Peterborough Cathedral during this period, and the church was made Peterborough Cathedral. once more what it was before it was devastated by the Puritans. The expense was defrayed by a subscription within the diocese; and the work was superintended by the dean, Dr. Monk, who had become Bishop of Gloucester before it was finished.

The opening of the new London Bridge by their Majesties, in New London Bridge. August of 1831, was kept as a holiday throughout London; and the occasion was truly a great one.² This was a farewell to the old bridge, with its memories of a thousand years; and here was a far surpassing work, which might carry on the mind to a thousand years more. Here it was, in its strength and grace, bestriding the flood with its five wide elliptical arches, without obstructing the stream; and here it was likely to stand, perhaps, till bridges should be wanted no more. The King was in an enthusiasm; so exhilarating did he find the grandeur of the scene and the beauty of the day. He told the gentlemen of the bridge committee, as he stepped out of his barge, that he was most happy to see them on London Bridge; that it was certainly a most beautiful edifice; and that the spectacle was in every way the grandest and the most delightful that he ever had the pleasure to witness. It was towards the end of 1832 that the last stone of the last arch of old London Bridge dropped into the river; and, as the circles on the water were effaced, a historical scroll of many centuries seemed to be closed for ever.

London University was by this time advancing to a condition to receive its charter; and King's College, London, Education. was in a prosperous state, as to credit, funds, students, and the number of schools in London — now seven — in connec-

¹ London, ii. p. 322.

² London, i. p. 95.

tion with it. A university being clearly wanted in the north of England, that of Durham was projected, and its plan made known in 1831.

In 1831 took place the first meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science,—an institution of the time, which, though not involving all the benefit which the sanguine expected from it at first, has yet been the occasion of too many advantages not to be noted in its origin. In a few years it became evident, that, while the less-qualified members of the scientific world were delighted to run to these meetings, with their notions and their self-importance, and their admiration of the eminent, many of the greatest found it inconvenient, and, from the throng of the idle and unscientific, even irksome to attend; and that a great deal of mere talk and boast and quackery must be put up with; and especially that once a year was much too often for the convenience of real hard students to leave home for such meetings. But yet it was a noble thing for the wise in various departments of human knowledge to congregate and compare their discoveries and their views, and unite their efforts, and support one another's undertakings, and indicate to governments the scientific aims which it rests with the rulers of the globe to see fulfilled. At a later period, it will fall in our way to note the influences and enterprises of this association. Here it is necessary only to record that its origin is referrible to this period.

A statement of suicides in Westminster was drawn up from official documents in 1833, from which some instructive results were obtained.¹ It appeared that the number of men who destroyed themselves were nearly three to one in comparison with women; a fact which was accounted for by another of great importance,—that a very large proportion of suicides was occasioned by that state of the brain induced by intoxication. Some surprise was felt at the proof that the smallest number of suicides occurred in the month of November, which had hitherto borne the opprobrium of this kind of slaughter.—A sensible check was, from this time, given to the practice of duelling, by the disgust excited at a fatal duel between Sir John Jeffcott, chief-justice of Sierra Leone, and Dr. Hennis of Exeter. Sir J. Jeffcott had received his appointment and knighthood, and was on the eve of embarking for Africa, when some tattling took place at night, over brandy-and-water and cigars, which occasioned a challenge to Dr. Hennis. He denied the words imputed to him, but was called by his antagonist “a calumniating scoundrel;” forced out to fight, in spite of strenuous efforts on the part of friends; and

¹ Annual Register, 1833, Chron. p. 127.

shot dead, at the moment before the departure of his antagonist. Sir J. Jeffcott was tried in his unavoidable absence, and acquitted, as gentlemen always are in duelling cases; but he was necessarily displaced from his judicial post. He was drowned a few months afterwards by the upsetting of a boat off the coast of Africa. The vulgar, brawling character of the whole transaction, and the force put upon Dr. Hennis, sickened a multitude with the barbarous character of the ordeal of the duel, who had before regarded it in the light of an older time.

Another transaction between two men, who had not even the ground of friendship for their generosity, deeply touched those hearts which felt most the horror of the Exeter duel. In no crisis of human life are men put more severely to the proof than in shipwreck. The most awful shipwreck of this period, or that which was most generally impressive, was that of the "Rothesay Castle," in August, 1831. The "Rothesay Castle" was a battered, leaky old steamer, which plied between Liverpool and Beaumaris; and at this time she had a captain who appears to have been unworthy of the command of any vessel.¹ He started in rough weather, and silenced the remonstrances of all on board who implored him to put into a port of safety. She drifted and went to pieces in the night, from the failure of the coal through her excessive leakage; and all her pleasure-parties, her groups of tourists, her band of music, and her crew, were plunged into the deep at midnight. The captain denied that she was aground, when her cabins were filling with water, — swore that there was no danger, — hung out no lights, — refused to fire a gun, though the lights of Beaumaris were visible in the distance, — and was himself one of the first to perish. Only twenty-two persons were saved out of nearly a hundred and fifty who left Liverpool. Two men, strangers to each other, found themselves holding on to the same plank, which, it soon appeared, could support only one. Each desired the other to hold on, — the one, because his companion was old; the other, because his companion was young, — and they quitted their grasp at the same moment. By extraordinary accidents, both were saved, without the knowledge of either, and they met on shore in great surprise. Few greetings in the course of human life can be so sweet and moving as must have been that of these two heroes. Its contrast with that on the Exeter race-course, shows like a glimpse into heaven and hell.

In the summer of 1833, a terrific fire consumed the bonded stores connected with the Dublin custom-house, and occasioned a vast destruction of property; though little in comparison with what might have been, if, as was

Loss of the
"Rothesay
Castle."

Fire at the
Dublin cus-
tom-house.

¹ Annual Register, 1831, Chron. p. 129.

for some time apprehended, the quays and the shipping had been involved in the conflagration, and if much valuable merchandise had not been stored in fire-proof vaults. The sugar-puncheons flared up like great torches in quick succession; the tallow sent columns of flame up into the night; while fiery floods of whiskey rushed over the quay, pouring over the wall into the Liffey, which presented a sheet of blue flame over half its breadth, threatening the coal-vessels that were drawn to the other side. The origin of the fire was never discovered; though large rewards were offered by government and the magistrates, from a suspicion of incendiarism. Men thought that they had now witnessed the most remarkable fire that would be seen in their generation: but they were mistaken; for, in the next year, a conflagration occurred in which that of the Dublin custom-house stores was forgotten.

In course of centuries, the power of the Commons had increased till their House had become a dignified spectacle in the eyes of the world; yet the members sat, a closely packed assembly of business-like men, in the old St. Stephen's Chapel, — a dingy, contracted apartment, whose sides had been drawn in by wainscoting, to hide the pictures of the old Catholic times, and whose height was lessened by a floor above, and a ceiling below, the old ones. In such a chamber as this were the British Commons found by wondering strangers till the end of the year 1834. At that time, the tally-room of the exchequer was wanted for the temporary accommodation of the Court of Bankruptcy;¹ and it was necessary to get rid of an accumulation of the old exchequer tallies, — about two cart-loads in quantity. These tallies were used for firewood; but this method of clearance was too slow; and there had once been a bonfire of them in Tothill Fields. There was some talk now of burning them in the open air; but the plan was given up, in the fear of alarming the neighbors. The burning was ordered to be done, carefully and gradually, in the stoves of the House of Lords; but the common workmen, to whom the business was intrusted, did it in rashness and hurry, nearly filling the furnaces, and creating a vast blaze, which overheated the flues. Many times in the course of that day, — Thursday, October 16, — the housekeeper of the House of Lords sent to the men, to complain of the smoke and heat; but they believed in no danger. At four in the afternoon, two strangers were admitted to view the House. At that time, the throne could not be seen from the bar; the visitors had to feel the tapestry, to know that it was tapestry, — found the heat so stifling in one corner as to be led to examine the floor, when it

Burning of
the Houses
of Parlia-
ment.

¹ Report of Lords of the Privy Council.

appeared that the floor-cloth was "sweating" underneath, and too hot to be borne by the hand. In answer to the surprise and doubts of the strangers, the housekeeper replied that the floor was stone; and that that corner was so hot that its occupants sometimes fainted on full nights. Within two hours after the perplexed strangers were gone, with their disappointed notions of the House of Lords, the mischief broke out. Flames burst from the windows of a neighboring apartment, and the alarm was spread all over London. The ministers were presently on the spot, and the King's sons, and such members of both Houses as were in town. Little could be done; and, of that little, much was left undone from want of concert and discipline. Mr. Hume saved a portion of the library of the House of Commons; and many hands helped to throw out of the windows, and carry away, the papers of the law-courts. These law-courts were saved, at the expense of their roofs being stripped off, and the interior deluged with water. The most painful apprehension was for Westminster Hall; but engines were taken into the Hall, and kept at play so abundantly as to prevent any part being caught by the flames. Many valuable things were lost; and, among others, the original death-warrant of Charles I., and the registration and qualification roll signed by members of the Commons after taking the oaths. The destruction comprehended the two Houses of Parliament, the Commons' Library, the Lords' Painted Chamber, many of the committee-rooms; the Clerk's house, and part of the Speaker's, with all the habitations between; the rooms of the Lord Chancellor, and other law-officers; and the kitchens and eating-rooms. The comments of the crowd on such occasions show something of the spirit of the time. Mr. Hume, who was busy before all eyes, seems to have been the butt of the night, from his perseverance, for a long time past, in endeavoring to obtain a better House for the Commons to meet in. In one place, some gentlemen cried, "Mr. Hume's motion carried without a division;" and, in another, poor men were saying that Mr. Hume could never get over this; the fire was certainly not accidental; and everybody knew how he had said he would not bear the old House any longer, he was so uncomfortable in it. There was a shout about Lord Althorp's disrespect for the People's House, when he was heard to cry out, "D—n the House of Commons! save, oh save the Hall!"—which last words the French newspapers changed to "the House of Lords;" thus showing what an anti-reformer he was at heart. The Climbing Boys' Act was unacceptable to the sweeps of London; and now one of them was in high glee because the "hact" was destroyed, and, in the joy of his heart, set up, above all the roar, the cry of "Sweep!"

There was nothing unseemly in this joking; for, really, the occasion could not possibly be considered a very melancholy one by those who were aware how seriously the public interests were injured by the unfitness of the Parliament-houses for the transaction of business, and their hurtfulness to the health of members. "Mr. Hume's motion was now carried without a division;" whereas, it would have been years, under ordinary circumstances, before any move would have been practically made towards a better housing of the Legislature. The antiquarian interests concerned were not very strong,—the relic most mourned at first, the tapestry of the Spanish Armada, was afterwards found: no lives were lost; no poor men were ruined; and, on the whole, the impression was that this compulsion to build new houses of Parliament was not to be lamented.

In the morning, the King sent to offer Buckingham Palace for the use of the Legislature. Some suggested St. James's Palace; but it was determined to fit up rooms on the old sites as speedily as possible. On the whole, this was found the least expensive and most convenient plan. The House of Lords was to be made habitable for the Commons, and the Painted Chamber for the Lords, at an expense of 30,000*l.*; and not a day was lost in beginning the preparation for the next session. It was a week or more, however, before the fire was out. It smouldered among the coals in the vaults; and the play of the engines within the boarded avenues was heard, and puffs of steam were seen to ascend, till after the Privy-council had closed their careful and protracted inquiry into the origin of the fire. This origin, as has been said, was decided to be rashness and carelessness in burning the exchequer-tallies.

The last memorials, in the form of living witnesses, of the strong government at the latter part of the eighteenth century, were now slipping away. Thomas Hardy died in 1832, in very old age; and his comrade, John Thelwall, two years later. These men were made, by the passions of their time, the heroes of the Liberal party. They invaded the convenience and composure of authorities and men in high places by an intemperate assertion of somewhat crude views of liberty and political aims; and the authorities did something worse in invading the rights of these men, and of all other citizens in their persons, by endeavoring, by a harsh construction of law and facts, to convict them of high treason. The attempt was unsuccessful; and the men remained a sort of heroes, with a slight martyr-glory round their heads, as long as they lived. Their prosecution and acquittal, in company with Horne Tooke, were annually celebrated in London by a festival of the friends of civil and religious liberty, till the deaths

Deaths.

Thomas
Hardy.

John
Thelwall.

of Hardy and Thelwall brought the observance to a natural close. Another hero of the same period, Archibald Hamilton A. H. Rowan. Rowan, died in 1834, in extreme old age. He escaped the penalties of high treason, only by slipping out of prison, and putting off from the Irish coast in an open boat, in which he was long tossed about before he reached Brest. The charge against him was of treasonable correspondence with the French government. He was a gentleman of education and fortune; and in his old age, when time and change had mellowed his mind, his conversation and manners were full of charm. Forty years of a useful and benign life would have been wasted and foregone, if the gallows-noose had caught him in that cruel season, when extreme men of all parties hated each other with a hatred far too unphilosophical and impolitic to besem philanthropists and statesmen.

It was a day to be remembered by the whole Roman Catholic body in our islands, when a member of the body was, Charles Butler. for the first time after their long depression, called to the rank of King's counsel. The first who was so called was the distinguished Charles Butler, author of a whole library of books, the dread of bishops and other clergy for his religious writings, and the supporter of O'Connell in claiming his seat in Parliament for Clare without re-election. Mr. Butler was in his eightieth year at that time, and he lived three years longer.—An aged man died in the next year, 1833, who was not Earl Fitzwilliam. less beloved by the Catholics, and not less a friend to them, while himself a good Protestant,—the venerable Earl Fitzwilliam, who, in the harsh times at the close of the last century, was recalled from Ireland after a viceroyalty of two months, on account of his countenance of the Catholic claims. On the day of his departure from Dublin, all the shops were closed, and the inhabitants appeared in mourning. He was a member of the Grenville administration for a year before its fall; and his only public connection with politics afterwards was one as honorable to him as his Irish failure. He took part in a public meeting convened to discuss and rebuke the conduct of the Manchester Yeomanry in 1819; and for this he was dismissed from the lieutenancy of the West Riding of Yorkshire. Earl Fitzwilliam died in February, 1833, in his eighty-fifth year. He was soon followed, within a few months, by his old friend, Lord Grenville. Lord Grenville,—another stanch champion of Catholic rights, and one who had a long course of years in which to advocate all causes that seemed to him good. Lord Grenville had been speaker of the Commons, and found himself Secretary of State at thirty years of age; and this appeared nothing remarkable to him,—his friend William Pitt having

held place and power when ten years younger still. In our days, a politician of thirty is regarded as a youth of promise; but, whenever a great political genius arises, it is probable that rules and customs about age, as about every thing else, will give way. Lord Grenville reached the age of seventy-four, and died childless, so that the barony became extinct. Another aged minister of State died in the same year, — Earl Bath-
Earl Bathurst.
 urst, who was esteemed by his party as a good man of business, and one of their soundest members. Lord Spencer, who also died in the same year, aged seventy-six, had
Earl Spencer.
 not been a stable politician; having entered life as a Whig, afterwards become a supporter of Mr. Pitt, holding office at the admiralty during the period of Nelson's victories, and going into power, with Grenville and Fox, in 1806. His tastes were more literary than political, and he was the collector of the finest private library in England; the bulk of which was deposited in a suite of ground-floor rooms at Althorp, nearly 250 feet in length. The political influence of Lord Spencer's death was greater than that of his life; in his decease, being the occasion of the dismissal of the Whig government, and the return of the Conservatives to power.

Another nobleman, who died in the same year, was more fond of literature than of statesmanship; yet his name
Lord Teignmouth.
 must have honorable mention among statesmen. Lord Teignmouth began life as John Shore, son of a plain country gentleman. He entered the civil service of the India Company, and rose to the office of governor-general of India. Lord Cornwallis's settlement, and other great measures of that ruler, were mainly attributable to Lord Teignmouth. Yet his heart was more in literature than in statesmanship. He was the bosom friend of Sir William Jones, whose life he wrote, and whose works he edited. In his old age, he was the president of the Bible Society, and died in his eighty-third year. — Another statesman, who cared more for philosophy and litera-
Earl Dudley.
 ture than politics, was lost to the world in 1833, mourned by all with compassionate grief, — Earl Dudley. He was only fifty-two, and his powers had died before him; for his brain gave way, after many threatenings and much suffering from a morbid temperament, two or three years before his death. He was an intimate of Horne Tooke, the friend of Canning, and a cabinet minister in 1827; a man of fine tastes and accomplishments, and of independent thought. After much repugnance, he had determined to support the Reform Bill, as a better alternative than withstanding the will of the nation; but, when the time came, he was too ill to take his place in the Legislature, and he never knew how the great question had issued. Sir John

Leach, Master of the Rolls, and a Privy-councillor, died in 1834. He began his studies as an engineer; but a discerning friend perceived in time his aptitudes for the legal profession, and induced him to follow it; and England thus obtained one of the best judges of modern times. His defence of the Duke of York, in 1809, obtained for him the good-will and confidence of the Prince-regent; and his way was then clear to the eminence which he reached. He opposed the creation of the Vice-chancellor's Court; but yet became Vice-chancellor after Sir Thomas Plomer, and Master of the Rolls after Sir J. Copley (now Lord Lyndhurst). His clearness of apprehension in the reception of evidence, and his decision of judgment in determining and delivering the results, were his most remarkable professional characteristics; and in private life he won respect by a singular calmness and simplicity in the endurance of a long course of bodily suffering of great intensity. Most men would have died untimely under such pain as he endured; but his indomitable mind bore him up, and he reached the age of seventy-four. — The interest of the whole political world of Europe was engaged by one death which took place at this period. The young son of Napoleon, the Duke de Reichstadt, died at Vienna, in 1832, at the age of twenty-one. The birth of the little King of Rome, as he was called in his cradle, had been regarded, in the short-sightedness of men, as a mighty event; and the eyes of the world were fixed upon the child. But, before he was old enough to be conscious of human destiny, his rights were gone, his father was borne away over the sea, and he became a landless German prince, under the care of his grandfather, the Emperor of Austria. His attendants adored him for his personal qualities; and from a distance many hopes waited upon him; but he was withdrawn from any possible struggle for thrones and dominations by early sickness and death. By the age of sixteen, he had outgrown his strength; and consumptive tendencies encroached upon him, till he sank thus in early manhood. As he lay in state in the palace, those who passed by the bier received the most affecting lesson of the time as to the deceitfulness of worldly hopes.

In science, one of the most interesting names of the times is that of Sir John Leslie, born of an humble farmer and miller in Fifeshire, who died professor of natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. He was a sickly child, averse to books and lessons, but always delighting himself in calculations, and following out mathematical inquiries. This peculiarity fixed the attention of the parochial minister, and was the occasion of his being sent to St. Andrews, to study for the church. He and Ivory went to Edinburgh together; neither of them, pro-

bably, anticipating the eminence to which both were to raise themselves. Leslie was aware that the church was not his true destination; and he declined it, becoming tutor to a nephew of Adam Smith's, and to two of the Randolphs of Virginia, with whom he went to the United States. On his return, he intended to lecture on natural philosophy; but found, to use his own words, that "rational lectures would not succeed." A disgraceful controversy took place between the magistrates and clergy of Edinburgh respecting his nomination to the mathematical chair in their university, in 1805; the clergy objecting to him on the ground of his having irreligiously declared Hume's "Theory of Causation" "a model of clear and accurate reasoning." The magistrates appointed Leslie, in disregard of the clerical opposition; and the clergy brought the affair before the General Assembly. After a discussion of two days, the Assembly decided not to subordinate science and liberty of opinion to dogma pronounced on an occasion of mere inference, and dismissed the appeal of the clerical objectors as "vexatious." Mr. Leslie filled that chair till he was called to succeed Playfair in the professorship of natural philosophy, which he held till his death, in November, 1832. He invented or revived the differential thermometer, and aided science in many ways by a vigorous exercise of his bold inventive and conjectural faculty, which was more remarkable in him, mathematician as he was, than his powers of reasoning and research. His pupils complained of a want of simplicity in his style, and of clearness in his arrangement; while more advanced students believed that the difficulty lay also in his overrating the powers and experience of those to whom he addressed himself. The highest order of his hearers were continually charmed with the life and vigor of his views, and the rich illustration he cast over his scientific subjects from the stores of his general reading. His experimental processes were exquisite, from their ingenuity and refinements. His last production is to be found prefixed to the seventh edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," — a discourse on the history of mathematical and physical science during the eighteenth century. He died in his sixty-seventh year.

In the next year, died a mathematician who put his science to a practical use which all could understand. William Morgan, who was for fifty-six years actuary to the Equitable Assurance Society, was a nephew of Dr. Price; and it was Dr. Price who withdrew him from the medical profession, to which he was destined, and caused him to be fitted to the function in which he did so much for the practical application of the science of probabilities, and for the elucidation of national finance. He published much that was useful; but it was as a standing

authority, always ready for reference, that he rendered his most important services; and all the while, the Equitable Office was rising, under his management, from being a small society, with a capital of a few thousands, into an institution of national importance.

The hurricane at the Mauritius, in 1834, killed a man whose name is destined to live in connection with nautical science, — Captain David Thompson, — whose computation and production of the lunar and horary tables, and invention of the longitude scale, were emphatically acknowledged by the Board of Longitude. He did much to fence in with safety the broad highway of nations; and thus his services so lie on the verge between science and the arts as to lead us to consider him as a comrade of the great man who opened so many roads to us on the firm land, and whose engineering achievements come

under the head of the arts. — Thomas Telford was president of the Society of Civil Engineers at the time of his death, which happened in the autumn of 1834, when he was seventy-seven years of age. Telford was a poet in his youth: and surely we may say that he was a poet in action in after-life; for where are lofty ideas and a stimulus to the imagination to be found, if not in such spectacles as the Menai Bridge, and the Caledonian Canal, and his great Welsh aqueduct, and St. Katherine's Docks, and the water-communication that he made through the pine-hills of Sweden, from the North Sea to the Baltic? It was thus that he regarded his works, and in this spirit that he wrought them; for he had the loftiness of mind, the bright integrity, and benign candor, which are the characteristics of genius that has found its element. There is hardly a county in England, Wales, or Scotland which is not strewn with monuments of him, in the best form of monument, — beneficent works. There is no day of any year in which thousands are not the better for the labors of this man. Two years before his own death, Telford had been called to mourn that of a pupil and a friend whom he had introduced into a career which promised

success something like his own. Alexander Nimmo was, when very young, recommended by Telford to the parliamentary commissioners for fixing the boundaries of the Scottish counties; and, again, to the commissioners for reclaiming the Irish bogs. All round the coast of Ireland his works are found, — harbors, docks, piers, and fishing-stations; and his chart of the whole coast is held to be a guide of great value. He died at Dublin in 1832, aged forty-nine.

During the same period, we lost Richard Hall Gower, the author of various improvements in naval architecture, which were gradually, though slowly, brought into

R. H. Gower.

practice before his death in 1833; and Henry Bell, who, so early as the 2d of August, 1812, launched the first steam-vessel, called the "Comet," on the Clyde; and the aged Lionel Lukin, who was the inventor of the safety-boat. The Norway yawl, on which he first experimented, was bought by him with his earnings in his coach-building business in 1784; and his patent bears date the next year. Though his boat was established for the time by the approbation of Sir Sydney Smith, who found that it could be neither overset nor sunk, the invention of safety-boats was afterwards claimed by other parties, and Mr. Lukin was deprived of much of the honor and emolument which were his due. He contributed in other ways to the public safety and convenience; as by his raft for the rescue of persons carried under the ice, by a bedstead for invalids, and several improvements in the construction of carriages. He was ninety-two when he died, in 1834. — Some now living remember the introduction of the *Camellia japonica* into this country. We owe the luxury to Archibald Thomson, a kinsman of the poet of the "Seasons," and chief-gardener at the Marquis of Bute's estate in Bedfordshire. The superb *Magnolia Thomsonia* was raised from seed by Archibald Thomson; and he saw the plant reach a height of eighteen feet, and a circumference of twenty-four. Like most of the hardy and well-employed race of Scotch gardeners, he attained a great age, dying in his eighty-first year, in 1832. — The eccentric Abernethy died in 1831, after having made himself so talked about for his oddities as hardly to have justice done him for his important services. He raised the reputation of English surgery all over Europe by indicating and performing an operation, in certain cases of aneurism, which was before supposed impracticable; and, by its connection with him, St. Bartholomew's Hospital rose to be the first in London. Mr. Abernethy did not at all approve our following, in any degree, the ancient Egyptian practice of parting off the human body among dozens of classes of doctors, — so that one was to have charge of the limbs, and another of the lungs, and another of the stomach, and others of the eye, the ear, the mouth, and so on. Mr. Abernethy did not like to hear of oculists and aurists, but insisted upon it that no man was fit to undertake the charge of any member without being fit for the charge of the whole, as no function of the frame is isolated. In this, the sense of society went with him; the only wonder being, that, since the days of the old Egyptians, there should have been any doubt about it. Mr. Abernethy did not know where he was born, but only that his parents removed to London in his early infancy. He was sixty-six years old when he died.

Henry Bell.

Lionel Lukin.

Archibald Thomson.

John Abernethy.

Among the rovers of their time, we find two names of great interest in the list of the deaths of the period. Two midshipmen, it will be remembered, remained with the mutineers of the "Bounty," in 1788, when the other officers were set adrift in an open boat on the Pacific. One of these

midshipmen, Peter Heywood, died in 1831; and Mr. Purcell, who was one of those in the open boat, followed in 1834. Peter Heywood was only fifteen at the time of the mutiny; and, before he was much older, he led a party of sixteen of the mutineers to settle in Otaheite, in order to meet the vessel which it was certain would be sent after them from England. The "Bounty" was given up to Christian and his eight comrades, who had no wish to stir from where they were, or to meet any English vessel. When the "Pandora" arrived in Otaheite, the two youths rowed out to her, and made themselves known, when they were put in irons, and treated with extreme rigor. After a most disastrous voyage home, young Heywood met his trial, — showed that his case was one for pity rather than punishment, — was found guilty, but freely pardoned by the King. He afterwards became an able and trusted officer.

One of his last services was with Lord Exmouth in the Mediterranean, in 1815 and 1816. And Lord Exmouth died soon after him, — in February, 1833. As Lord Exmouth lay on his painful death-bed, we may hope it cheered him to think of the Christian captives whom he had released from their Algerine slavery. He reached his seventy-sixth year.

— Captain Sir Murray Maxwell, who commanded the unfortunate "Alceste" at the time of her loss, died in 1831. He passed, with spirit, fortitude, and in the finest temper, as dreary a period as can well occur in any man's life, — the fortnight which elapsed between Lord Amherst and his forty-six companions leaving the captain and crew on their desert island, and the arrival of the cruiser from Batavia which relieved them. During this fortnight, the little party of British seamen were besieged by Malay pirates, in fifty or sixty boats, who burned the "Alceste" to the water's edge, and allowed her crew no rest from self-defence, while they had no alternative before them but starvation. Captain Maxwell's command, under these circumstances, and the discipline of his crew, have obtained a world-

wide fame, as they truly deserve. — One other rover, Richard Lander, in whose discoveries the nation took an unwonted interest, was cut off untimely, by an attack of the pirates of the Niger in 1834. Lander had attended Captain Clapperton into the interior of Africa, and had witnessed and reported the discoveries made in Clapperton's final expedition; and he had afterwards, when accompanied by his brother, solved

the great problem of the termination of the Niger, by following it down from Boussa to the sea. His ears had drunk in the sound of the surf upon the beach, and his eyes had seen the sea-line, dressed all in the more than tropical light of triumph, and of solemn achievement; and this wonderful happiness — as much as is yielded by the whole life of some men — was to be enough for him; for in three years afterwards he was dead, at the age of thirty. He had bought an island off Attah, and meant to establish a trading-station there; but the piratical natives attacked him at a disadvantageous moment, and shot him in the hip, and he died of the wound.

In the department of art, there were great losses during this period. In 1831 died Mrs. Siddons, in her seventy-sixth year. There are few living now who remember Mrs. Siddons. her in the fulness of her power; but there are few who have not witnessed the enthusiasm of their fathers and grand-parents at the mention of her name, and who are not aware that the enthusiasm was justified as much by the purity of her character as by the glory of the genius which derived its exaltation from that purity.

A yet more ancient favorite, the favorite of George III., Quick the actor, died in the same year, aged Quick. eighty-three; and also the monarchical Elliston, — and Elliston. in a few months after, the comic Munden; and in Munden. 1833, Edmund Kean, the last of the stars of the first magnitude. Kean.

Kean was a study as interesting to the mental philosopher as to the playgoer, so extraordinary was his possession of his "single gift." It would appear beforehand, that to be such an actor as Kean must require a large variety, as well as a high degree, of intellectual ability; yet he never manifested any power of mind at all above the average — hardly indeed up to the average — anywhere but on the stage. His mode of life was not such as to husband his powers; and he died at the age of forty-five, worn out by excess, and exhaustion of body and mind. His first appearance was at four years of age, riding the elephant in "Bluebeard;" when his beauty, and especially the grandeur of his eyes, fixed the attention of some who afterwards saw him at the summit of his fame. His last appearance was in March, 1833, in the character of Othello, when his performance, begun languidly, was broken off in the third act by the utter failure of his strength; and, in the ensuing May, he was carried to his grave. The prospects of the stage were further dark- Retirement of ened by Mr. Young having retired in the preceding Mr. Young. year, during which an attempt was made to retrieve the failing fortunes of the drama, by the appointment of a par- Dramatic liamentary committee on dramatic representations, for Committee. the purpose of ascertaining what changes could be made in the

licensing laws, which could relax the monopoly of the two great theatres, and afford a better opening for authors, actors, and the play-going public. Amidst all the reasons alleged for the decline of the drama,—such as the late dinners of the aristocracy, the absence of royal patronage, and the spreading objection of certain religious bodies to dramatic representations,—it was clear that the main cause of that decline was the decay of the public taste for this kind of amusement, without which the other causes alleged would not have been operative. The committee, however, recommended a large invasion of the existing monopoly of the two great theatres, for their own sake, as well as justice to others; a revision of the system of fees to the censor of plays; and an extension of the same protection to dramatic authors as was enjoyed by authors in other departments of literature. The rising passion for the Italian Opera afforded, at the same time, a hint to parties concerned to try whether the popular taste for the spoken drama was New English or was not merging into that for the musical drama; Opera-house. and the New English Opera-house was opened in the summer of 1834.

Two eminent pianists died during 1832,—one at the end of a very long career, the other at the beginning of one which promised great marvels,—Clementi, who reached his eighty-first year, and George Aspull, who died in his nineteenth. Augustus Pugin, a Frenchman, spent the last forty years of his life among us, and revived in England the study of ecclesiastical architecture, which has since spread and flourished under the favoring influences of the Tractarian party in the church. He died in 1832, in his sixty-fourth year. In the department of vertu, we lost Christie, who, being intended for the church, became an auctioneer; but such an auctioneer as was never dreamed of before. He raised his business to the rank of a profession, and lived in a world of artistical and philosophical ideas which the poet might covet. He explored the nature of the Greek game invented by Palamedes before the siege of Troy, and believed that he had traced it down, through old ages and countries, to our own firesides, where it bears the name of chess. He wrought among the old idolatries and their symbols, till he penetrated into some curious secrets of art. He was the first authority in the kingdom in pictures, sculptures, and vertu. He made the world understand the value of Mr. Hope's collection of vases; and these friends, after having solaced themselves with the delights of art and antiquarianism, left the world together. Mr. Christie died on the 2d, and Mr. Hope on the 3d of February, 1831. Mr. Hope's name is distinguished on so many grounds, that it is rather difficult to assign

Muzio
Clementi.

George
Aspull.

Augustus
Pugin.

James
Christie.

Thomas Hope.

his place among our benefactors. From our insular position, and our being kept at home by the long war, and also from our English habit of ridiculing what we do not understand, we were at first guilty of treating Mr. Hope with contempt when he endeavored to improve our taste in decorative art; and an article in the "Edinburgh Review," on his folio volume on "Household Furniture and Decorations," stands as a monument of our shame. But Mr. Hope triumphed; and we have gained, among other things, a lesson in modesty. It was he who first sustained Thorwaldsen, and brought the young Chantrey to light, and stimulated the mature genius of Flaxman. His town and country houses were a paradise of delights to lovers of antiquities and art. He is perhaps most generally known as the author of "Anastasius;" a romance in which the author gives evidence of, among other things, the thoughtful spirit in which he went through his early travels in the East. To another hunter after antiquities ^{John Thomas Smith.} we find ourselves more deeply indebted now than any one was aware of during his life; for John Thomas Smith, keeper of the prints and drawings at the British Museum, died the year before the burning of the Houses of Parliament. Mr. Smith had published, in the closing years of the last century, "Antiquities of London;" and when, in 1800, the accession of members on account of the Irish Union compelled the enlargement of the House of Commons, and the wainscoting of St. Stephen's Chapel was taken down, revealing the old paintings that were behind, Mr. Smith determined on following up his former work with the "Antiquities of Westminster." He made haste, as the workmen were always at his heels; and in the August mornings he was at work as soon as there was light enough, and painted diligently till the workmen arrived at nine o'clock, when he sometimes saw them destroy the very paintings he had just been copying. He made memoranda, matched the tints carefully, and took all pains to perfect his work, both with regard to the paintings which were disappearing, and others which it was supposed might last for centuries. Many of the prints, colored and gilt by his wife and himself, were lost by a fire at the printing-office where they lay; and the loss was severe; but the place given him at the British Museum provided comfortably for his latter days. He is remembered chiefly as the preserver of the antiquities of Westminster; but this was not one of the seven great things by which he used to tell that his life had been distinguished. He delighted to say, "I received a kiss when a boy from the beautiful Mrs. Robinson,—was patted on the head by Dr. Johnson,—have frequently held Sir Joshua Reynolds's spectacles,—partook of a pot of porter with an elephant,—saved Lady Hamilton from falling, when the melancholy news

arrived of Lord Nelson's death, — three times conversed with George III., — and was shut up in a room with Mr. Kean's lion." It seems a pity that he did not live a few months longer, to see the flames swallowing up the Houses of Parliament, and exult in the thought of what he had saved from their ravages.

George Cooke.

Cooke, the engraver, who presented such a world of scenery to stayers at home, died in 1834, from brain-fever, at the age of fifty-three; and a few weeks after him the aged Thomas

Thomas

Stothard.

Stothard, who began life as the apprentice of a pattern-designer for brocaded silks. Brocaded silks went out of fashion; and Stothard had, as the fruits of his apprenticeship, his nicety of eye and hand, and elegance of taste in designing small embellishments; and he used them in illustrating, with exquisite little designs, Bell's "British Poets," and the "Novelists' Magazine." These caught Flaxman's eye, and brought him that good man's friendship. He passed easily from such small works as these to painting figures seven feet high, on the staircase at Burghley House. His latest designs are seen among the illustrations of Rogers's "Poems," bearing date 1833, — some

Peter

Nasmyth.

months before his death. Peter Nasmyth, called "the English Hobbima," died in middle life, in 1831, with the love of his art so strong upon him, that when he was dying, and a thunder-storm was sweeping by, he asked his sisters to draw aside the curtain, and lift him up, that he might watch the effects of the stormy lights. And then went the young

Henry

Liverseedge.

Liverseedge, just when his fame was rapidly rising, and before he had reached his thirtieth year. He lived in the world of Shakspeare, Cervantes, and Scott; and it was his picture of Adam Woodcock that was kindling his fame when the

John Jackson.

cold hand of death was laid on his life. Jackson, the portrait-painter, — not so strong as Raeburn, nor so graceful as Lawrence, but with a clear style of his own, distinguished by its fine coloring, — died in 1831; and in 1833 we lost,

George F.

Robson.

by a sad accident, Robson, whose landscapes were amongst the most eagerly looked for at the Water-color Exhibition every year. The cause of his death was the bursting of a blood-vessel in sea-sickness. His life was happy from that devotedness in the study of nature which is not subject to the disappointment to which most human pursuits are liable. His eagerness about his first earnings was that they might carry him into the Scotch Highlands, where, with his plaid about his shoulders, and the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" in his pocket, and the dusky fells and rolling mists before his eyes, he was happy to his heart's content. The spirit of those early seen Scotch mountains is in his pictures to the last. The frequenters of the Water-color Exhibition must have been struck by the fre-

quent appearance of Durham and its cathedral. It was because Durham was Robson's native city. He took care that its fine aspect should be nearly as familiar to others as to himself; though they had not, as he had, feasted their eyes upon it from four years old, and crept to the shoulder of every wandering artist who sat down to sketch anywhere in the environs. One of Robson's last pictures was judged to be one of his best, — "London from the Bridge, before Sunrise."

There are, in the province of literature and learning, some names of the departed during this period which we would not let pass without some grateful mention; and there are others which excite a deeper emotion. Among the humbler benefactors in this department was Priscilla Wakefield, whose books Priscilla Wakefield. for children were usually found in a thumbbed and tattered condition on nursery shelves, — intensely moral as they were, and fine in the phraseology of their dialogue. In those days, when there were scarcely any children's books in existence, her efforts were as welcome as they were praiseworthy. Mrs. Wakefield died, very aged, in September, 1832. — An excellent man was removed in the same year, before he was forty, who had given his life to such good works that it is sad that his years were not doubled. Richard Evans, himself a scholar, and Richard Evans. the conservator of the ancient Welsh manuscripts of the Cambrian Society, took to heart the ignorance of the poor Welsh in London who were not at home in the English tongue. Mr. Evans collected and superintended a little colony of Welsh families — about twenty — in the neighborhood of one of his warehouses. He instituted weekly lectures on mechanics in Welsh, for all of that people in London who chose to attend; and he spent much money and time in diffusing the means of knowledge among them. — In Hazlitt we lost the prince of William Hazlitt. critics at this time; and, after he was gone, there were many who could never look at a picture, or see a tragedy, or ponder a point of morals, or take a survey of any public character, without a melancholy sense of loss in Hazlitt's absence and silence. There can scarcely be a stronger gratification of the critical faculties than in reading Hazlitt's essays. He was born in 1778, and died of cholera in 1830. He was not an amiable and happy, but he was a strong and courageous minded man. His constitutional irritability was too restless to be soothed by the influences of literature and art, and his friends suffered from his temper almost as much as himself. Yet he was regarded with respect for his ingenuous courage in saying what was true about many important things and persons of his time, of whom it was fitting that the truth should be told. Hazlitt would have passed his life as an artist, but that he could not satisfy his own

critical taste, and had no patience with any position but the first in any department in which he worked. The greater part of his life, therefore, was spent in a province of literature in which he was supreme in his own day, if not alone. As an essayist, he had rivals; as a critical essayist, he had none. — Two popular dramatists, O'Keefe and Prince Hoare, died in 1833 and 1834. The name of O'Keefe carries us back some way into the last century; his popular farce, "Tony Lumpkin," having been acted at the Haymarket theatre in 1778. After writing fifty dramatic pieces, he subsided into the quiet befitting his blindness and old age, and lived till his eighty-sixth year.

Prince Hoare. Prince Hoare was very aged too, — eighty when he died. In 1788, his comic opera, "No Song, no Supper," won him his first fame. In more advanced life, he became secretary to the Royal Academy; and, from his scholarship in art and literature, he was a member of several societies. He was esteemed and beloved for the most engaging moral qualities; and his parting act was a beneficent one: he bequeathed his library to the Royal Society of Literature. — The venerable

William
Roscoe.

William Roscoe, of Liverpool, died in 1831, — venerable for the benignity of his character and the purity of his tastes, and especially for the gentle steadiness with which, through long seasons of trial, he upheld the cause of the negro against the slaveholding spirit of Liverpool in his day. On this matter, he never, with all his love of peace and social good-will, gave way for a moment. It is for this, rather than his literary acts, that Mr. Roscoe is and will be remembered. His principal work was the "Life of Lorenzo de' Medici," which obtained great reputation at once, from the character of the times, which, impeding research of the kind required, rendered such works scarce, and extremely superficial. Mr. Roscoe reached his eighty-first year.

Some of the most affectionate and solemn associations relating to this period are called up by the name of Mackintosh. Sir James Mackintosh. Sir James Mackintosh died, unexpectedly, in 1832, at the age of sixty-seven; and the word "untimely" was applied to his death, through a sort of general expectation that a man of such powers would yet do something which would make his great name live after him. In early life, when he published his "Vindiciæ Gallicæ," his name had been in every mouth; and, in his latest years, the House of Commons listened, heart and soul, whenever he spoke. But he was not destined to effect much during his life, or to make a monument for himself. He had stores of knowledge, remarkable powers of subtle thought, and an unsurpassed facility of expression, but a fatal indolence, which extended to the interaction of his faculties, scattered his resour-

ces, and vitiated much of the work which he actually did. His "Dissertation, containing a General View of the Progress of Ethical Philosophy," — prefixed to the "Encyclopædia Britannica," — is the work on which his reputation is commonly supposed to rest; but it is a more frail support than the memories of those who knew him, and than the records of his speeches in Parliament. It will not bear the test of advancing science, any more than the kindred writings of Dugald Stewart. In Parliament, his heart and voice were always on the side of justice and humanity, as justice and humanity appeared to him. In print and in private, though there might be much that was superficial and unsound in his views, as well as subtle and profound, the spirit of earnestness and reverence was never absent. He held the office of recorder of Bombay for some years; and was in Parliament for several sessions; and had a way to any eminence opened to him by the pioneering influence of general expectation: yet he died amidst a celebrity which had still more of anticipation than of acknowledgment in it. His life had been a swaying between contemplation and action; and, though he might by this have obtained some enlargement for his own mind, the indecision was fatal to his leaving any substantial memorial of himself in either region. He enjoyed the friendship and homage of most of the leading men of his time; and there was no one living who did not share his placid good-will. His integrity in political life was in accordance with the simple unworldliness of his mind.

Henry Mackenzie, who wrote "The Man of Feeling," died, at the age of eighty-five, in 1831. A mistake of his own ^{Henry Mackenzie.} affords as good a eulogium as his worshippers could desire. From the unbounded success of his beautiful story, "The Man of Feeling," he was induced to offer a companion-novel, "The Man of the World;" which shows, unmistakably, the unsophisticated character of the author, and his inability to understand the ways and thoughts of worldly men. Those who were amazed at the badness of the second tale, should have felt rebuked for their disappointment by the beauty of the first. — Anna Maria Porter, the novelist, died in 1832, just ^{Anna Maria Porter.} three months before him whose marvellous works had swallowed up the fame of all contemporary writers of fiction. While Scott was yet but a boy, however, — while he was lying on the heathery hillside, nourishing and playing with his powers of conception and narration, — Miss Porter's novels, "Thaddeus of Warsaw," the "Recluse of Norway," and others, were giving great pleasure, and preparing the multitude of lovers of fiction for the treat to come. — Of Scott, it is impossible, ^{Sir Walter Scott.} as it is needless, to speak at length in this place. Every trait of his life is in all memories; every character of his

long-drawn pageant is vivid before all eyes. Any attempt to estimate his share in modifying the mind of his time would be in vain; and, if it were not, the materials for an estimate lie equally open to all. Every one can inquire of himself what the writings of Scott have been to himself, and to those whom he knows best; and, from that recognition, let him form his estimate. As for the man himself, every one knows all that can be told, and sees that he was not so happy or so wise as such a genius as his should have made him; that he did not honor his genius, and repose upon it as it would have been bliss to do; but looked down to lower objects, and so was deprived of his repose by that very genius avenging itself. In a mood of respectful compassion, the nation had seen him sinking under toil to which a commonplace ambition had subjected him, and which it would have been cruelty to compel him to forego. For some time before his death, his mind had sunk utterly; and at last the day of repose for the feeble body came, — brightly and mildly. It was in the noon of one of those autumn days which are so sweet in Scotland, when the window at Abbotsford was open, and the ripple of the Tweed over the stones was heard by those who were around the deathbed, that the eyes closed and the breathing ceased. The life which had gone out had been crowded with toils; the world was full of these rich gifts, and the national heart was sad at the thought that there could be no more. The gifts remain, however, a boon for each coming generation as it rises; and thus the fame of Scott may well be committed to the general charge. — There was a sad sweep among his connections afterwards. Within half a year, his confidant, partner, friend, and printer, James Ballantyne, without whose co-operation the whole of his enterprise must have borne a different character, died in middle age. And in the next June, the daughter Ann, who had tended Scott in his long decline, drooped and sank. And since that time, all his other children have died, — in these few years; and no descendants but two grandchildren are left to inherit the glory for which he cared so little, and the estate for which he sacrificed so much. Such are the caprices of the human mind and the human lot!

Of poets, we lost, during this period, some of great note. The elegant, scholarly Sotheby was not one to be popular; but he gave much pleasure to his own circle of admirers, and his life was happy in a serene course of literary exertion. He made many elegant translations, and wrote tragedies, masques, and epics; none of them containing elements of grandeur, but all of them full of purity and grace. He lived to seventy-six, and died at the close of 1833. — The venerable George Crabbe died, in old age, in 1832, leaving behind him memories which any one might covet. It

William
Sotheby.

George
Crabbe.

is one of Burke's titles to honor that he saved this pure genius from extinction under the pressure of poverty, from no lower impulse than a generous humanity. Crabbe was starving, when he made a simple and straight appeal to the great man, and was met in the spirit in which brother should meet brother in our perplexed human life. From that hour, all went well with Crabbe; and his long life was passed in virtuous clerical duty, in domestic peace, and in giving a charming utterance to his experience of the heart, and his observation of the various human lot. His poems are full of minute details, ennobled by a genial spirit, and made touching by the pathos of truth and love. His poems, besides finding their way at once to a million of hearts and homes, remain a quiet but living picture of English life in his time, which may probably kindle the heart of a remote antiquarianism in ages when English life, always the same in spirit, may have changed most of its forms.—S. T. Coleridge may perhaps be best placed among the poets, rather than the philosophers of his time, because the finest characteristics of his philosophy give an immortal sub-

stance to his poetry, while they leave his philosophy without base or permanent substance. A genius so lofty and so various has rarely distinguished man; but the absence of one essential element brought it down to a lower level than that of a crowd of otherwise inferior minds. With an imagination which soared above the stars, a subtlety which would have enabled him to hold his place in a council in Pandemonium, a power of abstraction which should have strengthened him to put the sensuous world beneath his feet, and an eloquence which might have enslaved the human race, he had no power of will,—of that virtuous will without which every man, be he who he may, is himself a slave. In Coleridge it was a constitutional defect, early marked, and fatal to his life; it was a constitutional deficiency, to be allowed for as such: but it must not be disguised, that it rendered him incapable of duty,—of fidelity in friendship, in citizenship, and in domestic life. And it vitiated his philosophy by eating out of it its reality and substantive truth. Thus, his theology was any thing but the gospel,—the religion which men prize, because it is equally the treasure of the lowly and the exalted in intellect: it was an airy fabric of the argumentative faculties and the imagination, and baseless sentiment, and not a deep concern of the understanding and the heart. And thus it was with his philosophy; for true philosophy absolutely requires a broad foundation of science, and the vital element which can be supplied only from the affections. This said, which in conscience must be said, the rest remains wonderful,—even awful in its wonder. And the consolation of the case lies in the virtue which the

power and the deficiency together called out in other men. The forbearance, the tenderness, the reverence, with which Coleridge was regarded, in the face of his vitiated life, are more than a compensation for what was wanting in himself. From the days when awe-struck schoolmates gathered round "the inspired boy" in the cloisters at Christ's Hospital, to the present moment, when his worshippers turn away from a sound of censure, as from a desecration of his grave, he has met with that magnanimous justice which it requires some of the loftiest qualifications to command; and in this influence lay one of the chief benefits of his life. Others were the sublime faculty by which he opened to us new worlds of thought, and made the oldest new; the subtlety of analysis by which he displayed the inner workings of what was before our eyes, before closed and impenetrable; the instinct by which he discerned relations among things which before were isolated; and the thrilling sense of beauty which he awakened by bringing all the appearances of nature into illustration of ideas before wholly abstract. Thus, his discourses on the laws and facts of thought, his dramatic criticisms, and his own poems, are full of lights and charms which hardly need the magic of his utterance to make them intoxicate the young thinker, and stimulate the faculties of the more mature. He was the wonder of his time. If he had not been subject to one great deficiency, he would have been its miracle. As it is, his fame is not likely to grow,—less because his magical voice is silenced, than because his enchantment itself must be broken up by the touch of science. Even then, glorious will be the fragments that will remain. They will be truly the traces of old idolatries,—not of one, but of many; for he spent his life in the worship of a succession of idols,—those idols being ideas, which he called opinions, and which he was for ever changing. S. T. Coleridge was born in a Devonshire vicarage, in 1772; and he died at Highgate, on the 25th of July, 1834.

A man of great benevolence, who indirectly contributed much to the great work of national education, which yet remains, for the most part, to be achieved, ought to be mentioned at the close of this period. Dr. Bell, a prebendary of Westminster, was once a chaplain in India, and there conceived the idea of extending the benefits of education by setting pupils to instruct each other. He reported his method; and it was soon adopted in England to such an extent, that he saw 10,000 schools established, attended by 600,000 children. He believed that the object of general education was gained; and so did many others. It required some years to show that nothing like education can be obtained by the ignorant teaching the ignorant. The results have been such as to disabuse the most sanguine. But public

Dr. Andrew
Bell.

attention was turned to the instruction of the childhood and youth of the nation ; and, in this sense, we may be said to be still benefiting by the introduction of the Bell and Lancaster system. Dr. Bell employed his large fortune in acts of beneficence ; devoting 50,000*l.* to the establishment of a college in his native city of St. Andrews. He died in January, 1831.

Having now recorded the acts, and buried the treasures, of an important period of our history, we must proceed to learn what further blessings have been brought home to our country and people by the life-giving hand of Peace.

BOOK V.



CHAPTER I.

FROM the time of the passage of the Reform Bill, the three parties in the State — kindred with those which exist in every free State — began to accept one another's new titles, and the professions included in those titles. The Tories, Whigs, and Radicals wished to be called Conservatives, Reformers, and Radical Reformers; and the easy civility of calling people by the name they like best, spread through public manners till the word Tory was seldom heard except among old-fashioned people, or in the heat of political argument. The Whig title has since revived, — inevitably, — from the Whigs having ceased even to pretend to the character of Reformers; and the Radical Reformers were not numerous or powerful enough in Parliament to establish for themselves a title which should become traditional. There was some dispute, and a good deal of recrimination, at the outset, about the assumption by each party of its own title: the Tories declaring, that they were as reforming, in intention and in fact, as the Whigs, only in a preservative way; the Whigs declaring, that the only true conservatism was through reforms like theirs; and the Radicals, who were called Destructives by both the others, declaring, that a renovation of old institutions — a regeneration on occasion — was the only way to avoid that ultimate revolution which the Tories would invite, and the Whigs permit. While the titles were changing, the parties were as yet essentially the same as ever. As usual, they consisted mainly of the representatives of those who had much to lose, those who had much to gain, and the umpire party, disliked by both, whose function is to interpose in times of crisis, and whose fate it is to exhaust the credit acquired, in such seasons, during long intervals of indolence and vacillation. Such was, as usual, the constitution of the three political parties, after the passage of the Reform Bill, and when the changes in their titles actually took place; but there were clear-sighted men at that time who perceived that the change of

names was but the first sign of an approaching disintegration of the parties themselves,—a disintegration which must be succeeded by more or less fusion,—that fusion being introductory to a new exhibition of products. The old parties, notwithstanding their new names, were about to disappear. They could not be annihilated; but they would re-appear so transmuted that none but the philosopher would know them again,—with new members, a new language, a new task, and a whole set of new aims. As much of this prevision has come true as time has yet allowed for. The disintegration and fusion have taken place; and all thoughtful people see that a new formation of parties must be at hand. One limit of the transition-period of parties remains still future; the other must be laid down at the date of Sir Robert Peel's accession to power, in December, 1834. Here we have the old Eldon oracle speaking again,—speaking “in the spirit of fear,” and not “in that of power, and of love, and of a sound mind,” and therefore giving out its truth in a dismal disguise; but still giving out more truth than anybody could use at the time. Here we have Lord Eldon's party view of the future; while the Wellingtons and Rodens, and Knatchbulls and Lyndhursts, and Wharnclyffes and Ellenboroughs, were in power, at the opening of the year 1835:¹ “The new ministers certainly have the credit, if that be creditable, of being inclined to get as much popularity by what are called reforms as their predecessors; and if they do not, at present, go to the full length to which the others were going, they will at least make so many important changes in Church and State, that nobody can guess how far the precedents they establish may lead to changes of a very formidable kind hereafter.” Though Lord Eldon could see no other reason for Tories making changes than a hankering after popularity, we can discern in the facts, and his statement of them, the beginning of that wasting away of parties which he did not live to see.

The new Conservative rule began with a joke. Some, who could not take the joke easily, were very angry; but most people laughed; and, among them, the person most nearly concerned,—the Duke of Wellington,—laughed as cheerfully as anybody. Sir Robert Peel was at Rome: it must be a fortnight before he could arrive, and nothing could be done about the distribution of office in his absence; so the Duke took the business of the empire upon himself during the interval. This he called, not deserting his sovereign; and he was as well satisfied with himself in this singular way of getting over the crisis, as on all the other occasions when he refused to desert his sovereign. His devotion was such, that, for the interval, he

The Duke's
offices.

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 244.

undertook eight offices, — five principal, and three subordinate. “The Irish hold it impossible,” wrote a contemporary, “for a man to be in two places at once, ‘like a bird.’”¹ The Duke has proved this no joke, — he is in five places at once. At last, then, we have a united government. The Cabinet Council sits in the Duke’s head, and the ministers are all of one mind.” The angry among the Liberals treated the spectacle as they would have done if the Duke had proposed to carry on the government permanently in this manner. Condemnations passed at public meetings were forwarded to him, with emphatic assurances that the condemnation was unanimous; an orator here and there drew out in array all the consequences that could ever arise from the temporary shift being made a precedent; and Lord Campbell condescended to talk, at a public meeting at Edinburgh, of impeaching the multifarious Minister. At all this, and at a myriad of jokes, the Duke laughed, while he worked like a clerk from day to day, till the welcome sound of Sir Robert Peel’s carriage-wheels was heard.

It is a strong proof of the virulence of the party-spirit of the time, that even generous-minded men, experienced in the vicissitudes of politics, could not at first — nor till after the lapse of months or years — appreciate the position of Sir Robert Peel. Everybody saw it at last; and there were many who, during that hard probation, watched him and sympathized with him with daily increasing interest and admiration; but there were too many who turned his difficulties against him, and who were insensible till too late to the rebuke involved in the fine temper which became nobler, and the brilliant statesmanship which became more masterly, as difficulties which he had not voluntarily encountered pressed upon him with a daily accumulating force. His being at Rome proved how little he had anticipated being called to office. He had no option about accepting it, — his sovereign sent for him, and he must come; and, when he arrived, he found there was no possibility of declining a task which he believed to be hopeless. Unpopular as the Whig Ministry had become, the Conservatives were not the better for it, but the worse: for the cry for reform was growing stronger every day; and he could have no hope of gratifying the majority of his own party, as he could not attempt to repeal the Reform Bill, or to get back to the old ways. There was nothing before him but failure, with discredit, on every hand; but, while he would certainly never have chosen to fill a position so hard and so hopeless, he had a spirit whose nature it was to rise under difficulties, and to feel the greatest alacrity under desperate conditions.

Position of
Sir Robert
Peel.

¹ England — Seven Administrations, iii. p. 141.

One of the desperate conditions was, that he could not form the Cabinet which his intentions and the necessities of the times required. He arrived in London early on Tuesday, the 9th of December, and went at once to the King; yet, on the next Saturday, nothing was known but that he would himself be Chancellor of the Exchequer, as well as First Lord of the Treasury. Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham had declined being of his corps; and he did not accept the ultra-Tory adherents of the Duke whom he found hanging about on his return. In his ministry are found, naturally, but unfortunately for its chances, four men whose political steadiness could never again be counted upon, — Lords Lyndhurst and Rosslyn; Sir James Scarlett, now made Lord Abinger; and Mr. Alexander Baring, afterwards Lord Ashburton. The rest were of such politics as *to discredit at once all professions of the Duke and his friends*, in Sir Robert Peel's absence, of the desire of the government to promote all rational reforms. The Duke himself went to the foreign office; Mr. Goulburn, to the home; Mr. Herries, to the war; and Lord Aberdeen, to the colonial ^{New Cabinet.} office. Sir Henry Hardinge was Irish Secretary; Lord Wharncliffe, Lord Privy Seal; and Lord Rosslyn, President of the Council. Lord Lyndhurst was on the woolsack, and Lord Abinger became Chief Baron. Some of the King's sons-in-law, who were Whigs, resigned their offices in the household, and were succeeded by Conservatives of a very pure water.

Another of the desperate conditions was the state of parties in the Commons. From the moment there was a rumor of a difficulty between the King and Lord Melbourne, the Whigs and Radicals in the House began to incline towards each other, lest the reformers of England should lose any of the ground they had so hardly gained. From the moment it became known that Lord Melbourne had declined the earldom and the garter, which the poor King had the bad taste to offer as a compensation for unreasonable treatment, all differences were sunk for the season, and the two parties united as one; so that it was believed, on every hand, that little more than a fourth — certainly less than a third — of the existing House of Commons would support the new Ministry. Though the people might not, at that juncture, return a much more favorable House, the experiment must be tried. Parliament was prorogued on the 18th of December; and on the 30th it was dissolved by proclamation, and a new one was convoked, to meet on the 19th of February.¹

Before taking the sense of the country, it was necessary for the Minister to put forth some declaration of what the country

¹ Annual Register, 1834, p. 337.

had to expect from him; and this he did in the form of an address to his Tamworth constituents, avowing that he ^{Tamworth} ^{manifesto.} was at the same time addressing the whole middle classes of the nation. It is observable, that, while he speaks undoubtingly of his obligation to take office, and heartily of his intention to toil and persevere, there is scarcely an expression in the address which indicates hope of permanence and success. Its tone is cheerful, but no one could call it sanguine: and, in indicating the principles on which he means to act, he speaks for himself alone, and makes no reference to a Cabinet policy, or to administrative co-operation in any way; merely declaring, in a parenthetical manner, that the sentiments of his colleagues are in entire concurrence with his own.

First, he declares himself a reformer of abuses, and points to his own great measures in regard to the currency, to criminal law, to jury trial, and other matters, in proof of his disposition to remove abuses and facilitate improvements. In the same spirit, he would accept and make operative any reform actually accomplished, whether he originally approved of it or not; and he would therefore accept the Reform Bill, considering it a "final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question;" and he would carry out its intentions, supposing those to imply a careful review of old institutions, undertaken in a friendly spirit, and with a purpose of improvement. Coming down to particulars, he would not interfere with the inquiry of the corporation commissioners, of which he had shown his approbation by being voluntarily a member of the parliamentary committee upon it. He had voted with government on Lord Althorp's church-rate measure, and was still willing to relieve the Dissenters from the grievance of paying church-rates, and of a celebration of marriage in terms to which they conscientiously objected. He would not admit the right of Dissenters to admission to the universities; but he would recommend an alteration of the regulations which prevented any of the King's subjects from being on a perfect equality with others in respect to any civil privilege. He would not countenance any retrospective inquiry into the pension-list, — filled, as it had been, under circumstances that had passed away; but he would advocate more care in future in the conferring of pensions. About church-reform in Ireland, again, his mind was not changed: he was in favor of the best distribution, be it ever so new, of ecclesiastical property for ecclesiastical purposes; but he could not sanction its application to any other than strictly ecclesiastical objects. He wished to see a commutation of tithe in England; and, with regard to deeper matters, — the laws which govern the Church, — he desired time for further thought, and opportunity for new light. The somewhat deprecatory tone

of the conclusion of this address is striking now, and must have been strongly felt by all the many classes of readers who thronged to get a sight of it on the morning of its appearance. "I enter upon the arduous duties assigned to me with the deepest sense of the responsibility they involve, with great distrust of my own qualifications for their adequate discharge; but, at the same time, with a resolution to persevere, which nothing could inspire but the strong impulse of public duty, the consciousness of upright motives, and the firm belief that the people of this country will so far maintain the prerogative of the King as to give to the ministers of his choice, not an implicit confidence, but a fair trial."

Such was the text on which the popular comment of the elections was to proceed. It was much more liberal than the Liberals had expected; but, when they looked at the group of colleagues behind, they distrusted the Minister and his manifesto, and set vigorously to work to elect a House which should bring all his counsels to nought, and frustrate all his efforts. He could not have said that they, as Liberals, were wrong; and neither he nor they could anticipate how their opposition would rouse his faculties and exalt his fame. This address appeared in one paper as a mere advertisement, in small type. In another, it was conspicuous as the leading article. It was immediately reprinted, throughout the country; and it is strange now to see it standing under the heading of "the Tory Manifesto." If this was its true title, Toryism had indeed changed its character, much and rapidly.

The first reformed Parliament had not satisfied its constituents: it had done some wrong things, and omitted many right ones; but it had had the great virtue of being in advance of the ill-compacted, desultory, unbusiness-like Whig Cabinet. It would have done more and better but for the drag of the Administration, which was always put on when there was up-hill work to be attempted. If the same Parliament had been allowed to remain, its great reform party no longer impeded by the Whigs, but aided by them, great things might be hoped. As it was not to remain, it was parted with more respectfully and good-humoredly than could have been supposed possible three months before, under a prevailing sense that much allowance must be made for the disadvantage of the reform Ministry having so soon fallen so far below all rational expectation. Every thing might be hoped from the next House of Commons. ^{The new} ~~The~~ Parliament.

The first object of every class of reformers was clear enough,—to depose the Conservatives, and reinstate a reforming Ministry; and it would be perfectly easy to do this by union between the Whig and Radical parties, though, as every one knew, there

would be more Conservatives returned under a Peel than under a Grey Ministry. More Conservatives were returned, but the Reformers had still an overwhelming majority; and from the hour when the members assembled, it was only a question of time — a consideration of sense and temper — when and how Sir Robert Peel should be compelled to retire. The popular power being thus clearly able to do what it would, it now appears strange that the virulence of the time was what it was. The Minister seems to have been almost the only man who preserved temper and cheerfulness, though his position was incomparably the hardest, — placed, as he was, in that hopeless position, without

any choice of his own. It is not necessary to record ^{Temper of the time.} the ill-humor of the time by anecdotes which would now convey more disgrace than the parties deserved; but it may be said, that the kingdom was covered with altercation, from the House of Lords, where the late ministers spoke with extreme bitterness of late events, down to the street-corners and police-courts, where fretful men complained of each other, and of the police, and the bill-stickers, and all officers concerned in all elections. The Conservatives quarrelled among themselves quite as virulently as either party with the other. The old Tories put out a caricature of the search of Diogenes, who lights upon Lord Eldon as the only honest man. The "Times" lectured the party on its slowness and apathy; and other Conservative papers denounced all compromise with reform, now that the opportunity was present of putting down the Papists and the Radicals by the powers of government, under the countenance of the King. As soon as it was clear that the Reformers had a very large majority, and when the "Times" retreated so far as to discuss the possibility of a coalition between the Grey and Peel parties, the other leading paper, the "Standard," intimated that the new Parliament would be immediately dissolved, in order to afford the people an opportunity of reconsidering their duty, and returning a House more agreeable to the other ruling powers. This intimation caused such an outcry about a return of the time of the Stuarts, that the paper softened its menace immediately; but it could not recall the hint it had given to the constituencies to keep up their organization, in readiness for a new election, at any hour. Accusations of bribery all round were profuse, and, on the whole, too well deserved; for the occasion was indeed a most critical one, when the corrupt, as well as the honorable, felt called on to put forth all their resources. Then, there was incessant quarrelling about the waverers, or doubtful men, who were just sufficient to make it difficult to calculate, and easy to dispute, what the Conservative minority would in reality be. Then, again, it was certain, that, from the losses to the Reform party

in the English boroughs, where corporation-reform was most wanted, the two parties were run so close that any effectual parliamentary majority must be yielded by Scotland and Ireland; and this gave occasion for a fierce renewed cry about Papist supremacy. When the last election-returns came in, it appeared to the most careful calculators that the Reformers were secure of a majority of above 130; and, if all the doubtfuls were given to the ministerial party, the Conservatives would still be in a minority of 82. Thus the fate of the new Ministry was decided, and known to be so, before the Premier met Parliament, — known at least by the Liberals, though the Premier himself appears to have gained confidence as time went on, from finding how much reform it was practicable for him to effect. At a dinner at Tamworth, he intimated that the ominous predictions of his being unable to carry on the government might not, perhaps, be necessarily true: Parliament might give him a fair trial, and he could not but think that many who were classed as Reformers held views very like his own.

The Reformers, however, felt that this was no time for a comparison of views on any particular subjects, but rather an occasion for deciding between opposite principles of government in the large. In this there can now be no question that they were right; and the more the late Whig Government had fallen short of fidelity to reform principles, the more important it was now to re-assert them, and to put aside any Minister, be his personal merits what they might and his policy ever so promising, who stood forth as the representative of the Tory party, with a group of Tories at his back. "Public principle" — however the words might be ridiculed by the newspapers of the day as meaning private interests and jealous tempers — did require that the distinction of parties should at that crisis be made as conspicuous as possible; and, if anger and disappointment and jealousy among ministerial men on the Whig side did make sad havoc with temper and manners, such incidents did not alter the duty of the time. Those Reformers who were much of Sir Robert Peel's mind about many things, and might have supported him in a tranquil organic season, were now bound to set him aside if they could; because the first duty of the critical period was to choose decidedly between an unregenerate and a regenerate system of government. There was not, therefore, necessarily any spirit of faction in the determination of the Reformers to begin the campaign by requiring a speaker of their own party. Election of the speaker. Whether or not they had been right hitherto in maintaining Sir Charles Manners Sutton in the chair, it was clear that it would not be right now. Times were altered; and the man was visibly altered by the change in the times. He had

been unable — as everybody else was unable — to resist the temptation to active partisanship; and he was so far less qualified for the chair than formerly, even if no “great public principle” had become involved in the question of his re-appointment.

Mr. Abercromby was the man on whom the wishes of the Reformers settled; but Mr. Abercromby objected to the nomination, and he resisted the honor till nearly the last hour. He yielded, however, and immediately left town; while it was universally known that on the other side even urgent personal canvassing was practised. This difference, and the inclination of many quiet or lukewarm Reformers to have a speaker of such proved qualifications as Sir C. Manners Sutton in so troubled a session as was before them, rendered it doubtful, to the last *moment*, which way the election would turn. There was an extremely full House on the critical 19th of February: only a few of the doubtfuls and six Tories were absent; almost all the rest of the waverers and thirty-five Reformers voted for the Ministerial Speaker; and yet Mr. Abercromby was chosen by a majority of ten.¹ The Reformers from this time knew that the session was theirs, if they were active and united. Sir Charles Manners Sutton at once received the peerage which his long services truly merited, being called to the Upper House by the title of Viscount Canterbury.

On the 24th, the King came down to open Parliament in person. His speech declared the rising prosperity of manufactures and commerce; but deplored the depression of agriculture, and recommended to Parliament the consideration of reducing the burdens upon land.² Wearisome as it is to record and to read of the depression of agriculture, almost from year to year, it becomes the more necessary so to do as we approach the period when a free-trade in corn was demanded by a majority of the people. It is necessary to see, as we proceed, what the state of things was which the opponents of change would have perpetuated, — what the good old times were which they were unwilling to abandon. This year, the farmers’ cry came up so piteously that it was echoed in the King’s speech; and it was left for the multitude below to wonder how it was that there were any farmers in England, — so losing a business as farming evidently was. Another series or two of farmers had to be impoverished yet, before the withering system of protection was put an end to; but every complaint to Government, and every mention by the sovereign, of agricultural distress, now went to remind the thoughtful that there must be something radically wrong in the existing system, whatever might be the difficulty of agreeing about a better. The King also requested the attention of Parlia-

Mr. Aber-
cromby
chosen.

King’s
speech.

¹ Spectator, 1835, p. 169.

² Hansard, xxvi. p. 63

ment to the tithe-questions in Ireland and England; to ecclesiastical reform in regard to discipline and the administration of justice; to the best way of relieving Dissenters from a form of the celebration of marriage to which they conscientiously objected; to the municipal-corporation question; to the operations of the ecclesiastical commission; and to the condition of the Church of Scotland.

The conflict of parties began at once, in the House of Lords, about the address. According to Lord Eldon's report, ^{Angry debate.} there was a serious dread, some days before, of a large majority against ministers, even in the Upper House; and the Conservatives made a solemn call upon each other to muster strongly, for the last chance of preserving their dignities and their property, lest their children, like those of the French nobility, should be doomed to become commoners. The feeble old man was himself in his place, almost for the last time. "I sat," he says, "last night in the House of Lords till between twelve and one, — till all in that House was over. I certainly would much rather have sat by my fireside, quietly, and enjoying the comforts of conversation."¹ But he was resolved, as long as he lived, to do his part in saving the monarchy. The debate was deformed by much anger and mutual unfairness. In both Houses, the recrimination was unworthy of so great an occasion, — the late Ministry unreasonably finding fault with the dissolution of Parliament, and with the Duke of Wellington's way of conducting the business of the State during the Premier's return from Rome; and the Conservatives unwisely dwelling on an anecdote of the time which has never ceased to be vividly remembered. It had actually happened, that, before the King could have sent to the Duke of Wellington, and before Lord Melbourne could have officially communicated to his colleagues the state of the King's mind, an ostentatious statement appeared in a morning paper, — a statement which must have been derived from a Cabinet Minister, and which was universally attributed to Lord Brougham, — that Lord Melbourne's administration was dismissed, and that "the Queen had done it all." Though the speech made no allusion to the change of Ministry, and Lord Melbourne's proposed amendment was also silent about it, the anecdote of the crisis formed the chief part of the debates on the address in both Houses. The amendments insisted on carrying out the principles of reform in regard to the projects contemplated by the late Parliament, and lamented its unnecessary dissolution before those reforms were completed. In the Lords' House, the amendment was simply negatived. In the Commons it was carried by a majority of seven.² And here, at the outset, the

¹ Life of Lord Eldon, iii., p. 243.

² Hansard, xxvi. pp. 151, 410.

Premier had to consider what was to be done.¹ He took time to consider, in order, as he frankly avowed, to guard himself against any misleading from mortification, and to ascertain whether the vote conveyed the real sense of the House. When satisfied that it did so, he did not oppose the amendment of the address; and it was carried up to the King, therefore, with the unusual feature conspicuous in it of the discontent of the Commons with the late dissolution of their House. The King was sorry, of course, that the Commons did not concur with him in regard to that act, and declared that he exercised his prerogatives with the sole view of promoting the welfare of his people.²

The restlessness of the Opposition was increased by the two majorities they had already obtained; and, through one opening or another, inquiries were incessantly conveyed to the Minister whether he meant to resign. His answer was, that the two votes did not convey a declaration of want of confidence in the government, and he therefore thought it his duty to proceed. These inquiries naturally caused rumors out of doors; and then again, these rumors were reproduced in the House, to elicit further explanations from Ministers. On the 2d of March, Lord John Russell made a statement of two reports which were prevalent, — that Parliament was again to be dissolved, on the first ministerial reverse; and that, if this should happen before the Mutiny Act could be discussed, the army was to be kept up on the responsibility of the administration without the assent of Parliament.³ That such a project should have been imputed to one political leader by another, in our day, is a remarkable indication of the disturbance of the general mind. Lord John Russell declared, that he should avoid putting the direct question whether these things were true; but that he intended to test the disposition of the Cabinet by bringing forward, at a time of which he gave notice, the appropriation-question, and that of municipal reform.⁴ The Premier's reply was clear and frank. He had never discussed or proposed anywhere a speedy dissolution of Parliament: but it was not his business to place in abeyance, by any declaration of his, the royal prerogative of dissolving Parliament; and this, as he observed, was a fuller reply than Lord Grey had given to the well-remembered question of Lord Wharncliffe on the same subject. As to the Irish-Church question, he and his colleagues were anxious that the commission should prosecute their labors, as yet only half finished; and, when they had furnished the requisite information, government and the country would see what ought to be done, — the present government adhering to its principle that the property of the Church ought to

¹ Hansard, xxvi. p. 425.

³ Hansard, xxvi. p. 471.

² Annual Register, 1835, 101.

⁴ Hansard, xxvi. p. 474-478.

be applied only to strictly ecclesiastical purposes, but being ready to amend the distribution of that property, when the requisite evidence should be complete. There was no objection on the part of the government to any needful reform of corporation abuses; but neither they nor anybody else could declare what such reforms should be till the commissioners should have offered their report. As for the rumor about the maintenance of the army without the sanction of Parliament, he had never heard the subject mentioned till that night. The same kind of suspicious inquiry was made of Lord Aberdeen in the Upper House about the carrying out of the Emancipation Act in the West Indies, when the colonial secretary declared, that no one could be more anxious than himself — whose first vote had been against slavery — that the Act should be completely carried out; and he had written to Lord Sligo to entreat him to remain in his office of Governor of Jamaica, and complete his work without any misgiving on account of the change of administration at home.¹

On the next great subject of discussion, men of all parties united on either side. Lord Chandos proposed, to the ^{Debate of the} embarrassment of the government which he usually ^{malt-tax.} supported, the repeal of the malt-duty, — the promise of which boon to the farmers was believed to have greatly influenced the elections. Many Whig and Radical members agreed with the Premier, that such a proposition could not be entertained before the financial condition of the country was known; that there was no reason to suppose that the surplus in the treasury could meet such a demand; that it was not the barley-growers whose distress now called for attention, as the price of barley had been rising for a considerable period; and that it was extremely doubtful whether the farmers would be peculiarly benefited by the repeal of the duty. On the division, Mr. Grote and Mr. Hume were found voting on opposite sides; and three members of the late government spoke in support of Sir Robert Peel against the motion of his own adherent: the strife of party was visible only in the sarcasms thrown out in the course of debate; and the majority against the repeal of the malt-tax was 158.²

On the next occasion of defeat, the administration had little sympathy from any quarter. They had made an indefensible appointment to an office of high importance, and they had to take the consequences; and the Premier among others, not only because his was the first responsibility in such cases, — however his opinion might be overruled in private, — but because he attempted a lamentable defence in Parliament of an appointment which could in no view be justified. Early in January, the following paragraph appeared in the "Times" newspaper: "We

¹ Hansard, xxvi. p. 419.

² Hansard, xxvi. p. 834.

notice, merely to discountenance an absurd report, that Lord Londonderry has been, or is to be, named Ambassador to St. Petersburg. The rumor is a sorry joke." It was no Lord London-
derry's joke. If all England had been searched for a man
appointment. whose politics were most like those of the Emperor of Russia, Lord Londonderry might well have been chosen ; and he was now to be sent to represent the mind of England to the Emperor of Russia, — now, when the affairs of Turkey were in a state to require the most accurate representation of the opinion of Great Britain, — now, when Poland was commanding the sympathies of the whole world, but when Lord Londonderry was in the habit of speaking decisively of the Poles as "the rebellious subjects of the Emperor of Russia ;" and when he professed himself a sympathizer with Don Carlos and Don Miguel. His lordship's notions about a fair personal interest in public service were also too well known throughout the country to dispose the people of England to place him again in their service. It could never be forgotten, that he had, a few years before, brought disgrace upon himself by declaring, in the House of Lords, that he had been calumniated and injured by the foreign office, and challenging Lord Dudley, then foreign secretary, to produce a certain correspondence which would explain the case. In the course of explanation, it appeared that Lord Londonderry had been importunate for a pension, in consideration of his diplomatic services ; and that the calm and moderate Lord Liverpool had written in pencil on the back of the letter, "This is too bad."¹ These things, before well known, were now repeated in Parliament ; and the portrait of the rank Tory nobleman, with his rashness, his obtuseness, his narrowness, his ingenuous conclusions that the people and their purses were created for the benefit of the aristocracy, was held up before the public eye in a way infinitely damaging to the administration. Sir Robert Peel held up, on the other side, his manliness and his military qualifications, — qualities which, with some other very good ones, nobody denied, but which did not constitute him a fitting representative of the mind of the British nation at the court of Russia. The appointment was not actually made out ; but Sir R. Peel declared himself ready to maintain the nomination. The difficulty, however, was ended by Lord Londonderry immediately withdrawing. The debate in the Commons was published on Saturday ; and on Monday, the marquis declared, with his characteristic manliness, that he saw it to be impossible that he could act with advantage at a foreign court, while disowned as a representative by any considerable portion of the political body at home ; and therefore, while scorning all scoffs and impu-

¹ Hansard, xxvi. p. 943.

tations, and heedless of invidious censure, he should, for the sake of his sovereign, decline the service proposed.¹ The Whig Lords were anxious to explain that their disapprobation was grounded on the speeches he had made in that House, which had manifested his dismay and anger at the expulsion of the Bourbons, his rancor against the Poles, and his sympathies with Don Miguel and Don Carlos; which state of opinion seemed to qualify him rather for the post of Russian ambassador in England, than British ambassador in Russia. The ministers were as severely judged by their own party on this occasion as by any other. They had humbled the King, and rendered his prerogative ineffective. If it had before been true that the sovereign could not practically carry out any such appointment without the approbation of Parliament, express or implied, the truth had not been exhibited; and decent appointments had made all easy. In this case, the King had been first misled and then humbled; and the Conservatives had little more mercy on the ministers than anybody else.

In the preceding year, Lord John Russell had brought forward a measure for the relief of Dissenters in regard to the marriage ceremony. It was well meant; but the Dissenters' marriages. Dissenters could not possibly accept it. All proposed legislation on this subject, thus far, had been kind in its spirit, and earnest in the desire to give relief; but it had unconsciously carried an air of condescension,—a supposition of respective superiority and inferiority not admissible in affairs of conscience. No one could be further than Lord John Russell from sympathizing in the sayings of the Eldons and the Wynfords, and others, who could not conceive of a Dissenter as a man whose rights were as precious, and whose conscience was to be as much considered, as their own. Nobody could be further than Lord John Russell from the insolence of asking what harm it could do a Dissenter to be blessed in a form of words offensive to his religious feelings, as long as he was not required himself to repeat those words. Lord John Russell was disposed to relieve the Dissenter from the pain and humiliation of being a party to a religious service which he conscientiously disapproved; and he proposed to open their own chapels freely to the body for the performance of the ceremony of marriage. But he did not see, till the rejection of his measure by the Dissenters pointed out the fact to him, that it was an infringement of religious liberty to render the Dissenters dependent on the Church for the publication of their banns, and the declaration of that procedure by the clergyman. He did not see that it was an encroachment on liberty of conscience to permit marriages to be celebrated only in places of worship; thus

¹ Hansard, xxvi. p. 1005.

perpetuating the modern innovation, injurious to many consciences, of absolutely connecting the civil contract with the religious celebration. On these grounds, and also because they objected to the necessity of affixing the license in some conspicuous part of their chapels, the Dissenters had rejected Lord John Russell's measure of the session of 1834. Many whose occasions have not led them to a very close study of the application of the principles of religious liberty, called them, as usual, captious. Others, who, like Lord Holland, knew the Nonconformists, and recognized their function in the State, received their petitions and statements with respect, and considered them with deference. "Take care," said Lord Holland to a brother-peer, a few years later, on another question of Dissenters' rights — "take care how you conclude against the Nonconformists on any question of religious liberty. I have seen more of them than most men; and I never differed from them without finding myself in the wrong." In such a temper of honest respect did Sir Robert Peel now look into this case of Dissenters' marriages. He went down to the principle of the matter at once, in which he was as well supported by the lawyers in the House as by the Dissenters out of it. On the principle that the civil contract is the first consideration before the law, and that, even in churches where marriage is regarded as a sacrament, the religious ceremony only arises out of the civil contract, the Minister now proposed to establish at once the broad principle of the validity of marriage by purely civil contract.¹ He also offered full liberty to all denominations of Dissenters to marry in their own chapels. It was honorable to the House of Commons that it received this broad measure as it deserved, recognizing the truth of its principle. So did the Dissenters also receive it; but, amidst their satisfaction and gratitude, they did not forget their fidelity to their function. They pointed out that even this bill would not establish equality before the law for men of differing faiths: it still provided one method of marriage for Churchmen and another for Dissenters, and they required liberty of marriage by civil contract to be extended to the whole of society. They also objected, on their own account, to being dependent on the clergy for the registration of their marriages. Lord Eldon's remark on this is: "The Dissenters are pleased; but they seem not to disguise that they are not satisfied. I take it that the true friends of the Church are neither pleased nor satisfied. As to the Dissenters, it is their nature not to be satisfied, as I can judge from very long experience."² These haughty gentlemen, who regarded the Nonconformists as a separate breed, and talked of "their nature," seem never to have asked themselves whether they would them-

¹ Polit. Dict. ii. p. 319.

² Life of Lord Eldon, iii. p. 244.

selves ever be "satisfied" to be compelled to marry nowhere but in a Roman Catholic Church, or to depend on the Catholic priesthood for the celebration and registration of their marriages. The Minister received the representation of the Dissenters with respect and good-will, and saw the force of the objection about the registration by the clergy; or, in case of the civil-contract celebration, by a magistrate who was usually a clergyman. He had it in his mind to bring forward a registration-measure of large scope; but he could not do every thing at once, and at present could only announce it. On going out of office, shortly after, he committed the whole business to Lord John Russell, by whom that ultimate measure was brought forward the next year, which has happily settled the marriage-question. This ultimate measure was brought in together with one for a registration of births, marriages, and deaths. By it, the civil contract becomes all that the state has to do with the celebration of marriage; and it is accomplished through the registration-office, while all persons are left free to conduct the religious celebration of marriage according to their own views.

During this extraordinary session, the Minister seemed to be inexhaustible, — in purposes, in resources, in energy, and, it may be added, in temper. By this time, his political antagonists had begun to admire; and the country was awake. Success and permanence in office were evidently out of the question still; but all that man could do, the Minister did to lessen the rancor of parties by uniting them in good objects. His speech upon the malt-tax had manifested great care, knowledge, and industrious research; and now his introduction of a measure for the commutation of tithes impressed his hearers yet more with a sense of these qualities. He hoped to induce a pretty general commutation of tithes, by offering facilities and inducements to such a settlement. His antagonists believed that none but a compulsory commutation would take full effect; and many pronounced any settlement at all of that question an achievement not to be expected of any statesman whatever. This was no occasion of party strife, while it evidently improved the Minister's position. He had caused the re-appointment of all the committees of the preceding session which had for their object the investigation into needs and abuses; and it was clear to all by this time that he had no intention of meddling with any questions on which the mind of Parliament had been declared, and its legislation settled. With regard to other matters, as well as education in Ireland, and the incipient plan for England and Wales, he declared his principle to be to acquiesce in what had been deliberately decided on, and to endeavor faithfully to carry out the purposes of the Legislature.

One of the first acts of the ministry had been to issue a commission to inquire into the evils which had arisen from the old ecclesiastical arrangements, now outgrown, about the territorial divisions, income, and patronage of the Church. Already the commission were in waiting with their report, which was presented on the 19th of March. A new arrangement of dioceses was proposed, and the erection of two new bishoprics, — those of Manchester and Ripon; while, on the other hand, the sees of Bangor and St. Asaph might be united, and also those of Llandaff and Bristol. An equalization of great church incomes, and a fairer distribution of work and salaries, were also proposed. About the same time, the Attorney-General gave notice of a Bill to Amend the Discipline of the Church of England; and he also renewed a measure for the improvement of the administration of ecclesiastical law, which had been originated under the Duke of Wellington's former ministry, and adopted by the Whigs in their act of issuing a commission. There was much disputation as to which party ought to enjoy the credit of these proceedings; for it was not yet clear to all who were in high places that a time was come, when, by a law of necessity, men must make a common stock of statesmanship, — must unite their wisdom for the general good, — and be satisfied with the honor and blessing of having originated, or of having carried through, good measures, with all procurable assistance from every quarter, without insisting on that glory of a more ancient statesmanship, in which the people had little or no part, — of being responsible for the whole conception, preparation, and execution of a new act of policy. Our successive ministers and their parties were, for a series of years, incessantly complaining of each other for taking up and carrying good measures which they did not originate; but what would they deserve as ministers if they avoided taking up and carrying good measures because they did not originate them? Ours are not times when men can say: "That is my bit of truth, and you shall not have it," — "That is my bit of usefulness, and you shall not touch it." The truth and the usefulness become, under a faithful representative system, as free as the light and the air. The real glory is in effectually dispensing them, — a work in which every political benefactor we have is more or less concerned with some predecessor; and if, in the midst of such work, any man's heart is really set upon his due of praise for his precise share in the suggestion and management, it might be easy to ascertain that precise share. The difficulty would be to make anybody care to know what it was. Amidst the prevalence of the charges all round of borrowing or stealing political measures, the people are quietly drawing their inferences; surely distin-

guishing the make-shift politician who catches at a popular cry, takes up in a slovenly way what is suggested to him, and offers it without improvement or adaptation, from the true statesman, who, amidst many mistakes of his opponents, sees here and there a good embryo measure, reflects upon and expands it, collects all needful knowledge about it, imbues it with originality and life, clothes it with a proper organization, and produces it in his day of power, acknowledging whence he derived it, but secretly conscious that but for him it would never have been thus matured. Such has been the process, so repeatedly and so conspicuously, of late years, on our platform of government, that men in high places have begun to understand it like the crowd below; and we hear less complaint, with every change of government, of a borrowing or stealing of the thoughts of rivals; but, during the short Peel Administration of 1835, such complaints were abundant, and very bitter.

This short Administration was now approaching its close. On the 24th of March, the Minister was outvoted about ^{Ministers' defeats.} the functions of a committee to inquire into a charge of intimidation at the late Chatham election, by an officer in command there. On the 26th, another defeat was sustained on the question of the London University charter.¹ The grounds of proceeding about this charter had been examined by the Privy Council; and, during the period of Whig government, nothing had been done about it; while Oxford and Cambridge had petitioned against any permission to the London University to grant degrees of the same denominations as those of the ancient universities; — not ^{London University charter.} objecting, as they declared, to the grant of a charter, or the power of conferring academical honors, but desiring to keep appropriate to themselves the titles of honor which should prove that those who bore them belonged to the Established Church, and had graduated at Oxford or Cambridge.² The motion on the present occasion was for an address to the King, beseeching him to grant such a charter to the London University as was approved by the law-officers of the Crown in 1831, and containing no other restriction than against conferring degrees in divinity and in medicine. The proposers declared, on being questioned, that the reason why they brought forward this motion now was, that they had no longer the hope which existed in the days of a Liberal government of the admission of Dissenters to the old universities; and, if such admission could not be obtained, they must seek for justice in the social career by acquiring such privileges as could be had for the one university which was open to them. The government amendment was one which did no

¹ Hansard, xxvii. p. 212.² Hansard, xxvii. p. 283.

credit to anybody concerned in it; and was, perhaps, the most damaging act of Sir Robert Peel's short term of office. It was of an obstructive character which could not be mistaken, — addressing the King for copies of the memorials presented against the project of a charter, together with an account of the proceedings before the Privy Council.¹ This was practically a reverting to the old wrong of considering the Dissenters an inferior and disgraced body, and excluding them from any fair chance in professional life; and the wrong was too flagrant for the times, strong as was the spirit of bigotry, and the habit of prejudice among the classes from which the Legislature is selected. The time was come when either the old universities must throw their gates wide to Dissenters, or they must abstain from interference with that honorable and conscientious body, — withheld by honor and conscience from winning university privileges, — in obtaining justice by another mode.² The government was left in a minority of 136 to 246. The King's reply to the address was gracious; but, for several months after the return of the Whigs to power, nothing more was heard of the matter. By the next August, the pressure of the government by the council had become such as to procure a proposal, which was at once accepted by all the parties concerned in the university, — that a body of men of science and scholarship should be incorporated by charter in London, for the purpose of examining candidates and conferring degrees in arts, medicine, and laws, on not only students educated in the one college in question, but in others in London, now specified, and also some in the country to be afterwards recognized.³ This satisfied all reasonable persons. The Dissenters desired justice, and not a monopoly; and the proposed extension conferred dignity, while securing enlarged usefulness. On the 28th of November, 1836, two charters were granted, — one to constitute the University of London, hitherto so called, "University College, London," for "the general advancement of literature and science, by affording to young men adequate opportunities of obtaining literary and scientific education at a moderate expense," — the other charter creating the "University of London." The proceeding, however, bore the ordinary character of the executive acts of the Whigs: it was imperfect, if not illegal, — the instrument bearing the words, without qualification, "during royal will and pleasure." These words doomed the charter to expire within six months after the death of William IV. Queen Victoria, as advised, revoked it, and granted a new one on a better tenure, which received the great seal on the 27th of December, 1837. In this charter the object is declared to be to hold out the encour-

¹ Hansard, xxvii. p. 279.

² Hansard, xxvii. p. 301.

³ Penny Cyclopædia, xxvi. p. 25.

agements of the institution "without any distinction whatsoever;" a declaration so clear as deeply to discredit an attempt made in the next year to introduce, in the form of optional discipline, a test which should establish "distinctions" on account of differing modes of faith.¹ It was Dr. Arnold who tried the unhappy experiment; and he failed, as the best-intentioned man must do who attempts to force his personal convictions on a public institution, in opposition to its leading principle, and the express terms of its charter. The university remains equal in its operations to all, on the broad ground of the equal rights of all, without fear or favor, to liberty of opinion.

To return to the last nights of the Peel Administration. There was a recurrence of party conflict at every practicable interval, — the opposition leaders reproach-
ing Sir R. Peel with periling the prerogatives of the Crown, and troubling the course of legislation, by attempting to govern without a majority in the Commons; and Sir R. Peel inviting a vote of want of confidence as a ground, and as the only ground, on which he would be willing to retire before having laid all his measures before the House. Lord John Russell replied, that such a vote could not be called for before the production of the ministerial measures, without subjecting the opposition to the charge of unfairness; the obvious reply to which was, that, if the opposition intended to wait for the ministerial measures before voting want of confidence, they ought to abstain from invidious remark and construction in the mean time. The opposition — those among them who were not leaders — acknowledged the truth of this, but gave an intimation that the opposition would choose their own time. After two or three weeks of such antagonism as this, the Whigs chose their opportunity. Their topic was the appropriation question; their time, the 30th of March.

On the 2d of March, Lord John Russell had intimated that he should bring forward the whole subject of the Irish Church in the latter part of the month, in order to
test the position of the Ministry with regard to the country. He waited till then for the reports of the commission. A fortnight later, he had doubts of receiving the reports, and declared them not necessary to his argument, but desirable for the satisfaction of members. On the 18th, he suggested that it would be well to wait for a partial report, which would soon be in the hands of members; on the 19th, he fixed his motion, with a notice of a call of the House, for the 30th; and, on the 20th, he formally relinquished every kind of demand of reports, because none would be ready, and he must proceed without them. The 30th, now, was to be the great day of assertion of the distinctive prin-

¹ Life of Arnold, ii. p. 121.

ciple of the Whig government, which was to serve as a test of the power of the existing Administration, and as the instrument of their overthrow, — the distinctive principle at that period, but not for long; for it was dropped presently after the return of the Whigs to power, and has never been heard of from them since. The conflict now under notice cannot be judged of without the retrospective light cast on it by this fact.

There had been an introductory debate on the ministerial resolutions which proposed to convert Irish tithe into a rent-charge, redeemable under such conditions as should secure the redemption; and in this debate the opposition were divided, — some objecting to the measure, and others complaining that it was a mere reproduction of the last Whig measure on the same subject; some desiring to proceed, and others thinking it essential to have the decision of the House on the appropriation question first. In consequence of these differences, the ministers carried their resolution.¹ On the 30th, Lord John Russell repeated his proposition, that the House should resolve itself into a committee for the purpose of considering the state of the Irish Church, with a view to applying any surplus left over from spiritual objects to the education of the people at large, without distinction of religious persuasion.² He declared himself friendly to the principle of an establishment; adopted the ground of utility laid down by Paley; showed that the Irish Church did not fulfil the condition, and must therefore be reformed; that, in this case, reform involved reduction, and a reduction involved a surplus; and that, as to the application of this surplus, no distinct line of religious appropriation could be drawn between making additions to the incomes of individual clergymen, and developing the mental and moral capacities of the inhabitants of the country. It was necessary to advert to the difficulty which the opposition leaders found themselves in through the delay of the commissioners' report. Last year, they had voted down the appropriation question, on the ground that the requisite information could be obtained only by the inquiry of the commissioners; and yet they were now bringing up the question again, without waiting for the results of the inquiry. The facts on which the question was based were indeed patent enough; and so had they been the year before, and every year of the century: but Lord John Russell rested his excuse for his inconsistency on the broad declaration of the Premier, that, under no circumstances, would he consent to the appropriation of ecclesiastical funds to any but strictly ecclesiastical purposes. Such a declaration, prior to the reception of the reports, justified the opposition, in their own opinion, in declaring their principle in a manner equally broad.

¹ Hansard, xxvii. p. 83.

² Hansard, xxvii. p. 361-384.

Another consideration, adverse to delay, was, that it was highly desirable to come to some vote, or other decision, which should show whether or not the Administration enjoyed the confidence of the House.

Lord Howick's speech was, perhaps, the most interesting, on the side of the Reformers, delivered during the four nights of this important debate. He lamented that this question was made the test of the stability of the Administration, because he believed that the abrupt overthrow of the Ministry would be extremely disastrous to Ireland, as protracting the unsettlement of the tithe-question, and causing a confusion which no succeeding government could remedy.¹ For his own part, he would have been glad to have been spared the necessity of declaring his views at such a juncture; but, being called upon to avow his opinion on the one side or the other, he was compelled to declare himself in favor of the principle of appropriation; and this he did in the most thorough and manly manner.² Sir Robert Peel's speech was what might have been expected from the training of his life, though far from what could be desired from the Prime Minister of the empire. He dwelt upon the compact with the Church in the Act of Union with Ireland; admitted that there were circumstances under which all compacts must be broken, as there were circumstances under which constitutions themselves must be dissolved: but he insisted on proof to demonstration that such moral sacrifices were inevitable before they could be deliberated upon; he denied that any proof of the kind had been offered in the present case, and declared his disbelief that any such could be produced. He insisted, that, before any convulsive proceeding could be honestly proposed, the innovators should be prepared with a comprehensive and complete new policy to supersede the existing compact; he was justified in asserting, after repeated challenges to his opponents, that no such scheme was prepared; and therefore, though he might be compelled to succumb to an adverse vote, he should ever condemn the procedure of procuring that vote at the expense of the Irish Church, rather than by means of a direct motion of want of confidence in the government. He believed that, on this question, the House was not an expression of national opinion; he believed that his view was that of the large majority of the people; and he therefore felt strong to meet the decision that might ensue from his adherence to his view of duty to the Irish Church. The whole speech proceeded on the assumption that the motion involved the virtual overthrow of the Irish Church, and a consequent convulsion; an assumption which the Reformers reasonably denied; but an analysis of the division seems to show, that, with regard to the state of national opinion,

¹ Hansard, xxvii. p. 454.

² Hansard, xxvii. pp. 728-760.

the Minister was right. Sound as was the appropriation principle, in the view of the soundest thinkers of the time, it was not one which interested the general mind; and it was not long before the Whig leaders had to make bitter complaints of the indifference of the people to it. It is much to be wished that the continued existence of the Peel Administration of 1835 had been put upon some other issue. The resolutions in favor of appropriation, proposed by Lord J. Russell, were carried by the Scotch and Irish members; the English leaving the motion in a minority of nine. Of the Scotch members, 32 were in favor of it, and 17 against it. Of the Irish members, 64 voted with the Triumph of opposition, and 37 with the government. The major-
opposition. ity against ministers was 33, in a House of 611 members. The division took place at three o'clock in the morning of the 3d of April.¹

In committee, Lord J. Russell moved a resolution, that no measure on the subject of tithes in Ireland could succeed which did not embody the appropriation principle; and he obtained a majority of 27. This was on the 7th of April.² On the 8th, Resignation of Sir R. Peel announced the resignation of the Cabinet.
the Cabinet. He avowed that it was with great reluctance that he retired, because his government, supported by the full confidence of the King, and by great moral strength in the country, could, as he and his colleagues believed, have speedily settled some public questions, especially that of Irish tithes, which required immediate adjustment, but must now be cast adrift.³ But they considered that, on the whole, it would be more hurtful still to the public service to continue the attempt to govern the country, unsupported by the confidence of the House of Commons; a confidence which, as was shown by four impressive defeats, they did not possess. There was, as Sir Robert Peel must have known, no need of protestations of personal disinterestedness; for the whole temper and conduct of the Minister during the last five months had been a consistent silent assertion of right feelings, as well as of the most eminent ability. Every one knew that he had had no option about undertaking office; and every one felt and said that he had failed only because parties had been, as yet, too strong for him. The opposition had gained nothing, during the interval, in general estimation, while he had gained as much as was possible in the time. At this day, there are many who avow that thick mists of prejudice dissolved from before their minds in the course of these five months; and that they now for the first time began to apprehend the character and appreciate the powers of Sir Robert Peel, — a character so peculiar as

¹ Hansard, xxvii. p. 770.

² Hansard, xxvii. p. 970.

³ Hansard, xxvii. p. 980.

to require a long observation to obtain a true view of it; and powers which had not, even yet, fully revealed themselves to those who knew him best.

The cheering of the whole House at the conclusion of his speech was long in subsiding. When any thing else could be heard, Lord J. Russell said that "he did not wish to make any comment on what had fallen from the right honorable gentleman, except to express his opinion that the right honorable gentleman had acted entirely in the spirit of the Constitution."¹

Now, then, the Reformers were to have another trial with the King and the country.

¹ Hansard, xxvii. p. 985.

CHAPTER II.

THERE was an interval of ten days before the King and country could feel that there was a government to rely on. It was a season of anxious expectation to all; but few were aware how many and how serious were the causes of anxiety.

The King sent first for Lord Grey, who declined office, but gave his best advice, — which was to send for Lord Melbourne. Thus, the character of the administration might certainly be anticipated; but what were they to do? By choosing the Irish-Church question for the overthrow of the Peel administration, the Whigs had pledged themselves to carry the appropriation principle into practice without delay, — even in connection with the pressing affair of the tithes; whereas the King was not only understood to be opposed to any innovations upon the privileges of the Church, but was remembered to have spontaneously and eagerly pledged himself to the bishops to resist all such innovations. Again, their present victory had been gained by means of the Irish members, who might and would fairly presume upon the fact, and who must be specially considered in the impending legislation for Ireland; whereas O'Connell had recently been pledging himself, in the hearing of all the world, to obtain organic changes of the greatest importance; and, in the first place, a reform of the House of Lords as sweeping as that of the Commons; and, as usual, he promised a speedy repeal of the union. Again, the Whigs had not among them any man of very eminent ability in statesmanship, while many were sufficiently distinguished for talent to be entitled each to set up for himself in regard to the work of his own department. In such a case, the absence of any controlling or harmonizing mind — of any mind which could be truly called that of a statesman — was fatal to all chance of firm and effective rule. Thus it appeared to the most thoughtful people throughout the country, who, remembering how the last Whig administration had disappointed expectation, considered the present prospect to be any thing but exhilarating. The King could not have forgotten these facts either; nor his alarm at the promised passage of political arms between Lords Brougham and Durham in

the winter, from which, but for the intervention of the Peel Ministry, might have arisen a new struggle between the halting and the advancing Reformers. Such a struggle might now probably be expected; for the whole country was aware that the Radical Reform party must become of importance, both as stimulus and support to the Whigs, who were almost powerless without them. It was believed to be an earnest wish of the King's, that such a conflict of liberal parties and leaders should be avoided; and that it was a positive stipulation of his, that Lord Brougham should not return to the woolsack. Lord Durham's health did not permit of his taking office at home, though it did not interfere with his filling a diplomatic function abroad. So we soon find him in the honorable post of ambassador to Russia. The great seal was for some time in commission, either from the difficulty of finding a Chancellor, or from the danger of making an enemy of Lord Brougham, who was one of the perplexities of the crisis. It had been found impossible to act with him; but it was dangerous and painful to have him for an enemy. If there was any alternative besides these, it was not found. He presently came out broadly in the character of an enemy; and even Lord Melbourne's good-humor and indifference were insufficient to bear up his temper, courage, and spirits, under the hostility of his former colleague,—unremitting and bitter as it was, and protracted from session to session,—not a little affecting, as we shall see, the political action of the time.

The country was aware of this complication of difficulties; the King felt it keenly,—the new ministers alone seemed undismayed by it. It was their way to be confident; and now they were exulting and gay, though the embarrassment of forming themselves into a government was great. It was the 8th of April when Sir R. Peel and the Duke of Wellington announced their relinquishment of office; and it was not till the 18th, after repeated adjournments of the Commons, that the new Administration was declared to be completed. Lord Melbourne was the Premier; and, in his announcement to the Lords, he spoke of the difficulties of the government as "great and arduous,—many, indeed, of a peculiar and severe kind."¹ Lord Melbourne, however, was understood to be more teased than dismayed by difficulties. He felt them more than he chose to show; for it was his chief fault to affect a *poco-curante* character of mind, unworthy of his sound sense, his actual diligence, and his disinterested love of his country. His patriotism took the form of a love of peace and quiet for society; and that love of peace and quiet proceeded, in a great degree, from the speculative character of his intellect. His

The Melbourne Administration.

Lord Melbourne.

¹ Hansard, xxvii. p. 998.

views were too comprehensive and too abstract to permit him to perceive the importance of particular questions and particular acts, or to engage his sympathies in temporary occasions, when other men were ardent and resolute. He was not one who would ever stimulate the public mind, or concentrate its energies on prominent ideas or definite enterprises. When occasions arose, he regarded them with philosophy, with sincerity, and with much of the ripe wisdom of the scholar and the gentleman; and, if compelled to act, he acted with diligence and decision: but he waited for them to arise, and conceived that it was his business to do so. He was out of his place as the head of a reforming Administration, from his inability to originate, and his indisposition to guide. In his function at the Home Office, he had done extremely well. His benign contempt and philosophical compassion for the ignorant herd had made him a calm and merciful ruler of the restless and untoward; while his good sense and sincerity, with his love of public tranquillity, had made him diligent and watchful in anticipation of disturbance. His conduct at the time of the demonstration of the unions on behalf of the Dorsetshire laborers was admirable; and it is understood that this passage of his political life so recommended and endeared him to the King, as to make the present transition of power easier than it could otherwise have been. There had not yet been opportunity for the world to become fully acquainted with his great and fatal fault,—fatal at such a crisis of the national mind and fortunes,—his affectation of scepticism and *poco-curanteism*. At a time when earnestness was the first requisite in the *chef* of a reforming Administration, the want of it would have been a deadly sin; and the affectation of the want was a moral offence. Unapt for combination, incapable of effective organization, as his colleagues were, his assumed indolence and indifference went to increase the evil, and may be considered one of the causes of their failure to govern the country well. He might consider it amusing to perplex and astonish deputations and single applicants by his extraordinary manners during interviews; but his pranks were of more serious consequence than he supposed, at a time when the people were in earnest, and believed that they had a government to which they might refer their cause. It was very well for him to look philosophically from a window of the Home Office upon the 30,000 unionists who came to intimidate him,—and some few, as he was aware, with the idea of taking his life; but it was a different thing to appear absorbed in blowing a feather, or nursing a sofa-cushion, when giving audience about the abolition of the punishment of death, or receiving a report on Criminal-law Reform, in preparation for the debate of the night. It was a serious thing to send for a

philosopher, to offer him a pension, and begin the interview with the remark that he thought such pensions a great humbug. And it did not mend the matter, that, on one occasion, which leaves the deepest blot upon his name, — one occasion which forms an exception to the general kindliness and philosophy of his temper and demeanor, — he showed that he really could and did feel in an intensity of party-feeling. In the next reign, he had mournful occasion to write two letters to the mother of Lady Flora Hastings; and then he was hard and ungentlemanly, even cruel, to a degree which deprived him of that reputation for superiority to emotion for which he strove by the affectation of a life. As yet, when he assumed the Premiership, in 1835, neither his failings nor his sterling merits were fully known. He was held in general respect and trust, without exciting any high expectation; but it was not long afterwards that the good-humored and scarcely burlesque character of him given by Sydney Smith, in his second letter to Archdeacon Singleton, was laughingly recognized as a capital likeness. The subject and the caricaturist are both gone now, and a solemnity is cast over the mirth of the time; but there is enough of truth and of serious appreciation in the sketch to make it valuable as a permanent illustration.¹ “Viscount Melbourne,” says Sydney Smith, “declared himself quite satisfied with the Church as it is; but, if the public had any desire to alter it, they might do as they pleased. He might have said the same thing of the monarchy, or of any other of our institutions; and there is in the declaration a permissiveness and good-humor which in public men has seldom been exceeded. Carelessness, however, is but a poor imitation of genius; and the formation of a wise and well-reflected plan of reform conduces more to the lasting fame of a Minister than that affected contempt of duty which every man sees to be mere vanity, and a vanity of no very high description. But, if the truth must be told, our Viscount is somewhat of an impostor. Every thing about him seems to betoken careless desolation; any one would suppose, from his manner, that he was playing at chuck-farthing with human happiness; that he was always on the heel of pastime; that he would giggle away the great charter, and decide, by the method of teetotum, whether my lords the bishops should or should not retain their seats in the House of Lords. All this is the mere vanity of surprising, and making us believe that he can play with kingdoms as other men can with ninepins. Instead of this lofty nebulo, this miracle of moral and intellectual felicities, he is nothing more than a sensible, honest man, who means to do his duty to the sovereign and to the country. Instead of being the ignorant man he pretends to be, before

¹ Works, iii. p. 216.

he meets the deputation of tallow-chandlers in the morning, he sits up half the night talking with Thomas Young about melting and skimming; and then, though he has acquired knowledge enough to work off a whole vat of prime Leicester tallow, he pretends next morning not to know the difference between a dip and a mould. In the same way, when he has been employed in reading Acts of Parliament, he would persuade you that he has been reading ‘Cleghorn on the Beatitudes,’ or ‘Pickler on the Nine Difficult Points.’ Neither can I allow to this Minister, however he may be irritated by the denial, the extreme merit of indifference to the consequences of his measures. I believe him to be conscientiously alive to the good or evil that he is doing, and that his caution has more than once arrested the gigantic projects of the Lycurgus of the Lower House. I am sorry to hurt any man’s feelings, and to brush away the magnificent fabric of levity and gayety he has reared; but I accuse our Minister of honesty and diligence: I deny that he is careless or rash; he is nothing more than a man of good understanding, and good principle, disguised in the eternal and somewhat wearisome affectation of a political *roué*.”

There was another *poco-curante* Minister in the Cabinet, though Mr. Charles Grant. it might be felt that one was enough. Mr. Charles Grant.

Grant, afterwards Lord Glenelg, was Colonial Secretary; and events were at hand which made his post as important as any in the Cabinet. He was regarded with universal good-will for his quiet steadiness in the advocacy of liberal principles; and he was respected as a man of large information and clear sagacity. But his indolence was extreme,—an indolence which was so thoroughly constitutional as to be inveterate; and he naturally failed in an office which requires the powers of more than one man to fulfil its duties, be his energy what it may. To make up for these lovers of ease, there were half-a-dozen men whose activity, in one form or another, nobody could question,—Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Lord Howick, Mr. Spring Rice, Lord Duncannon, and Mr. Poulett Thomson. As for Lord Palmerston, “the world was all before him where to choose” to make England felt and talked about for good or for evil. “Perfidious Albion” was sure to be the world’s topic while he was in power.

Lord John Russell. Lord John Russell was now to show — and the nation was truly anxious to learn — whether his activity would now be measured and sustained, under the responsibility of having wrested the government out of the hands of other men, and taken it into the grasp of himself and his friends; instead of requiring, as before, to be kept up by the pressure of deputations, and demands from without. He had to show whether he could originate as well as persist, and whether his persistence could hold

out to the point of success. He had to show whether he could keep in check his rash courage and self-confidence, learn to abstain from prophecy and pledge, perceive that he could be, and often was, mistaken, and leave off making declarations during the parliamentary recess, which the next session compelled him to stultify. No one doubted his readiness to undertake: the question was what he could accomplish. No one doubted his courage: the question was of his ultimate efficiency. No one doubted his patriotism: the question was of its scope and enlightenment. No one doubted his cleverness: the question was whether he had enough of philosophy, candor, and sustained energy, to raise his cleverness into statesmanship. No one looked to him for originality, — for the genius of statesmanship; if he had had it, it must have appeared before this time: but of the secondary order of statesmanship, the ability which can appropriate and organize and vivify the floating wisdom of the political world, and make it a ruling power, he might yet show himself capable. He had now a fair field; and that his own expectations were sanguine was shown by his determination to obtain power, and his exultation in having obtained it. Lord Howick went to the War Office, with a high reputation for honesty, diligence, and courage, and a fair one for ability, to begin with. Mr. Spring Rice, smart and good-humored, but not yet distinguished for financial wisdom, became Chancellor of the Exchequer; an appointment which the critical Sydney Smith thought somewhat rash. "If," said he, "Mr. Spring Rice were to go into holy orders, great would be the joy of the three per cents." But, as was said before, there is no knowing what kind of Chancellor of the Exchequer any man will make till he is tried. The merits of Lord Duncannon were not fully appreciated till he went to Ireland, some years afterwards; but the few who now took an interest in the management of the Woods-and-Forests department saw that its work was thoroughly well done, with quiet wisdom and strenuous diligence. Mr. Poulett Thomson was the only member of the government admitted from the Radical Reform party. He was President of the Board of Trade, for which his knowledge and experience and sound economical principles well fitted him. He entered the Cabinet on the stipulation that he should have perfect freedom in advocating the repeal of the Corn-laws. Ireland was well treated in the apportionment of office. The good-humored and accomplished Lord Mulgrave, afterwards Lord Normanby, with his demonstrative character and manners, was just the man to engage the admiration and good-will of the impressible Irish; while the benevolent and chivalrous Lord Morpeth, as secretary, and the no less chivalrous Drummond, as under-secretary, with

his wisdom, his highly principled diligence, and excellent habits of business, took care that the hard and serious work of the government of Ireland should be duly performed. As the case of Ireland was not yet understood, and the true and permanent principle of her rule had not yet been found, any policy attempted at that time could be but of temporary effect; and it was but a few years before her rulers avowed that their policy — of conciliation — was “exhausted;” but, as a preparation for a higher system of statesmanship, and a means of getting over the transition from a bad old system to an indeterminate new one, it was true, as was said at the time, that Ireland had never been so well governed as during the viceroyalty of Lord Mulgrave. As for the rest, — Lord Lansdowne was president of the Council; Lord Auckland went to the Admiralty; Lord Holland was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and Sir J. C. Hobhouse was at the head of the India Board.

The new ministers pledged themselves to two great measures as the principal work of the remainder of the session, — Municipal Reform, and the settlement of the Irish Church. The Irish-Church question was, at the moment and on principle, the most important of any question of the time; not only because it had broken up two Administrations, but because it involved the principle for whose sake the Whigs now possessed themselves of office, and by which, therefore, they were pledged to stand or fall.

On the 26th of June, Lord Morpeth brought forward the ministerial measure.¹ He avowed that, if the question now were whether or not to establish the Protestant Church in Ireland, no sane man would dream of such an act. But the Church was there, with all its long prescription, and its implication with the civil polity of the empire; and it was not proposed to touch its foundation, or disturb its framework. If it were to endure, however, it must be made a less exasperating spectacle than it was to the bulk of the people among whom it stood. The measure which he brought forward actually consisted, as was presently pointed out by the opposition, of two parts; though the framers considered the two so intimately connected that it was an act of opposition in itself to separate them. The first provided for the conversion of tithe into a rent-charge, in much the same way as in the last two measures proposed: the other provided for the appropriation of the accruing surplus to the religious and moral instruction of all classes of the community, without distinction of religious persuasions. After two readings, the proposal to go into committee was made on the 21st of July, when Sir R. Peel renewed his

¹ Hansard, xxviii. p. 1319.

opposition to the second part of the measure, on the two grounds, — that there would be no surplus; and that, if there were, it would be a breach of faith to the Irish Church to apply its funds out of its own pale, and for any but strictly ecclesiastical purposes.¹ The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated, that the House had decided, after long debates, that the question of appropriation was connected with the concession to the tithe-owners of the 1,000,000*l.* advanced to them in preceding years: he conceived that this precluded the division of the measure into two parts; and he declared the purpose of this partition to be to get rid of the appropriation clause, — which was undoubtedly true.² Lord Morpeth warned the Legislature of the consequences of drawing back from the resolutions recently passed in that House. The Irish were now aware that Parliament knew of the parishes vacant of Protestants, — of the churches without flocks, — of the incomes paid for no service, — of the provision for the extension of that Protestantism which was not extending, — of the desperate poverty and ignorance of the Catholic peasantry, who had hitherto been called upon to pay, instead of to benefit by, these funds; and, now that these things were admitted, — now that the principle of appropriation had been sanctioned by that House, — it was too late to recede. On a division, the ministers had a majority of 37, — the number being made up, not only by Irish members, but by a majority of 8 among the English and Scotch members.³ The Bill was now safe in the Lower House; and the ministers proceeded to add, in committee, a clause providing for the advance of 50,000*l.*, from the consolidated fund, in anticipation of the surplus to accrue, for purposes of general education in Ireland.⁴ The reason for this was that there was said to be much exasperation in some Irish parishes, where the new arrangements were not to take effect during the life of the present incumbents; and it was believed that the safety and tranquillity of these clergymen would be promoted by a beginning of the educational expenditure being made at once. The Radical Reform members opposed the concession of the 1,000,000*l.* advanced as a loan; and the ministers admitted the encroachment on the intentions of the Legislature, but pleaded the much more serious evil which would ensue from attempts to recover what was irrecoverable. The Bill passed the Commons on the 12th of August, and was read a second time in the Lords on the 20th. In committee, the Lords struck out all the appropriation clauses, by a majority of 97, in a House of 179.⁵ The ministers abandoned the whole Bill; and thus the matter stood over till the next year. It was

¹ Hansard, xxix. p. 790.

² Hansard, xxix. p. 1067.

³ Hansard, xxx. p. 984.

⁴ Hansard, xxix. p. 840.

⁵ Hansard, xxix. p. 1116.

a great evil, in the existing state of the Irish Church; but it was felt to be worth enduring for the sake of the essential principle involved in the measure, — a principle by which not only the Whig Administration, but the connection of England and Ireland, and the religious liberties of a nation, must ultimately stand or fall. If, three years later, the Whig Administration drew back from their obligation to stand or fall by this principle, neither they nor any other human power could alter its relation to the political connection of Ireland, and to the religious liberties of a nation.

The struggle was renewed the next spring. On the 25th of April, Lord Morpeth brought forward the tithe-measure, about which the two parties in both Houses would have agreed if it had stood without the appropriation provision.¹ This last was not brought forward in the express and conspicuous manner of preceding years; but Lord Morpeth gave notice that it was involved inextricably in the Bill. As yet, ministers were evidently resolved to stand or fall by it. He was now able to declare that there would certainly be a surplus, — he believed of nearly 100,000*l.*; but it would not be available for a considerable time. Lord Stanley moved an amendment, consisting of a proposal of the tithe-measure, without reference to appropriation. Amidst the general resemblance of the debates in successive years, there are interesting divergences of topic, and changes of views to be noticed. This year, there were three at least that were remarkable. The opposition had certainly advanced considerably in their estimate of the reforms that were essential to the maintenance of the Irish Church. They spoke more freely of the disgrace of the spectacle of an overpaid and an underpaid clergy within the same area; they were more earnest about equalization of incomes, and more bold about the prosecution of the needful inquiries. Another most pregnant fact was that Lord Stanley complained of the cause of disagreement as not practical. What the government stood out for was a mere abstract principle, — “a shadow” which they had better give up for “the substance” of his plan of details; and he implored them to relinquish the pursuit of what was so ineffectual, — such a mere idea, — and unite with their opponents in coming to practical business.² Often as we are compelled to mourn the moral scepticism, the destitution of faith, which is prevalent in the political world, and which is the just ground of the deep disrepute of legislative assemblies, almost universally, it is not often that we meet in Hansard or elsewhere with so open an avowal as this, — that principles are “the shadow,” and arrangements “the substance,” — that it is not practical for

¹ Hansard, xxxiii. p. 204.

² Hansard, xxxiii. p. 1274.

the Legislature to resolve, by clear implication, that there is a world of morals above and beyond the law, to which mankind must occasionally resort for the regeneration of their laws. To admit this solemnly and deliberately, in full conclave, with a spectacle of murder and famine before the eyes, and the curses and groans and wailings of a suffering people filling the air, is an unpractical thing for a legislature to do, while they might be busy in ordering a plan of distribution of money, — some more here and something less there, the suffering of the multitude remaining untouched. Lord Stanley was so far from understanding that a principle is the most substantial and enduring of realities, that he evidently thought he was speaking loftily and patriotically in making his unphilosophical and degrading appeal. He was sure there would be no surplus; and he supposed that settled the matter of the “principle” being unpractical.

The third noticeable incident was that the debate turned, for a little while, upon the important point: What is the object of a Church Establishment, — to propagate doctrine, or to enlighten the people by instruction and training? Sir James Graham thought the former; Lord J. Russell, the latter. It was for the former object that the Protestant Church was established in Ireland; and it was to the latter, that ministers now desired to overrule it.¹ It was truly a controversy for whose principle any government might be proud to struggle to the death; but, till now, no express discussion of the principle of a religious establishment seems to have been entered into during the debates of the last few years. The historical fact of the case in question seems to be, that the Church in Ireland was established for proselyting purposes; that these purposes failed; that, at the date before us, many were unwilling to give up the hope of yet converting the Irish to Protestantism, while, on the other hand, those who saw the hopelessness of such an aspiration, and who neither dared to touch the foundations of the Church in Ireland, nor to let her remain as she was, believed that the only chance for Church and nation was in connecting the Establishment with large and beneficent general objects. The case might have been simplified, and the strife softened, if all parties had spoken out, — some admitting the disappointment of their missionary aims, and others acknowledging that they were supplying a wholly new foundation for the Church; but no nearer approach to such frankness was made than by the slight and superficial controversy during the present debate. On this occasion, the ministerial majority was 39, — and the Bill passed the Commons on the 15th of July.²

The Lords again threw out the appropriation clauses, passing

¹ Hansard, xxxiii. pp. 1392, 1393.

² Hansard, xxxv. p. 241.

the rest of the Bill, with slight alterations in some clauses regarding stipends. These last gave occasion to Lord J. Russell, and, as he believed, justification, to refuse the amended Bill, as sent down, through a breach of privilege, — the Lords having interfered with a money-bill. The question was one difficult of decision, — the question whether this was a breach of privilege or not; and the Speaker himself avowed the nicety of the point. At length, the motion for rejecting the altered bill was carried by a majority of 29, — and once more, the controversy was adjourned to another year.¹

In the royal speech, at the opening of the session of 1837, we find a recommendation of the subject of tithes, among others, to the attention of Parliament; but the discussion of the topic was intercepted by the death of the King.² The argument on the principle of appropriation may, however, be observed proceeding, under other terms, throughout the discussion on the measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the solution of the question of church-rates. The temper of parties interested in church-questions was at this time bitter in the extreme. Lord Lyndhurst had made use of an expression about the Irish Catholics, haughty, hard, and unpatriotic, but still by no means conveying, when taken with its context, the full import which was attributed to it. He called the Irish Catholics “aliens in blood, in language, and in religion.” This language was naturally seized upon by the Irish agitators, and reprobated by the English Liberals who were authenticating, in every possible way, a conciliatory policy in Ireland. A striking scene took place in the House of Commons, late one February night, when Lord Lyndhurst was seen sitting under the gallery, and Mr. Shiel was speaking. On Mr. Shiel’s use of the word “alien,” uttered with the strongest emphasis, the cheering from the Liberal side of the House broke forth, and continued till it rose almost to a confusion of yells.³ The members appear to have had no compassion for a man sitting by to hear such reprobation, while prevented from explaining and remonstrating. Never was man more abundantly punished for an insolent expression; and the worst part of the punishment must have been the seeing daily, in all companies and in every newspaper, the words assumed to mean much more than he had intended them to convey, both from the temper in which they were quoted, and from their being separated from his argument. Then there was O’Connell’s National Association, threatening and boastful; then there were the bishops meeting at Lambeth, — on the first announcement of the ministerial church-rate measure, to prepare a

¹ Hansard, xxxv. p. 779.

² Hansard, xxxvi. p. 4.

³ Spectator, 1837, p. 169.

declaration against it, before it was brought before them as legislators; and there were the ministers vehemently resenting this method of opposition; and there were legislators and constituencies debating the question of the exclusion of the bishops from Parliament. The times were indeed bitter and angry; and the appropriation question was hardly likely to fare better than in preceding years.¹

The Chancellor of the Exchequer showed that something must be done to amend the unquiet and disgraceful state of things that existed in relation to the payment of church-rates. While the rate was voted by the vestries, and the vestries were composed of persons of every variety of faith, it was clear that the obtaining of a rate at all depended on the agreement of parties who had for a long time been disagreeing more and more. If the rate were refused, there were no means of obtaining it; and, in point of fact, church-rates had ceased in Sheffield since 1818; and, in Manchester, none had been levied since the beginning of the contest in 1833. It was not for a member of the government to give a full report of the reasons of the Dissenters for refusing to pay church-rates; and Mr. Spring Rice did not attempt it: but there was nobody in the House who was not aware, that opulent men, to whom time and trouble were of more account than money, had undergone toil and vexation to a great extent rather than pay very small sums for church-rates; and that several persons of high respectability had gone to prison in the cause. Many who paid tithes, without dispute, though unwillingly, — paid tithes because the payment was a charge involved in the purchase of their land, — refused to pay church-rates, having good legal assurance that they were not a legal charge, and being conscientiously reluctant to contribute, except under a clear legal obligation, to the maintenance of the places and forms of a worship which they disapproved. The proposal of the government was to place church-lands under management which should cause them to yield more than at present; and, from the improved income, to pay church-rates, and then hand over the surplus to the ecclesiastical commissioners. The Church and Conservatism smelt a savor of the appropriation principle in this plan, and they resisted it accordingly. They could not say, indeed, that the surplus was to be appropriated to other than ecclesiastical purposes; but they complained that it would intercept the Dissenters' money, and declared that the Church was entitled to all increase of income from her own possessions, and to the Dissenters' contributions too. Therefore it was that fifteen bishops assembled at Lambeth, and the Archbishop of Canterbury delivered his protest against the ministerial measure

¹ Hansard, xxxvi. pp. 1207-1252.

before it had left the Commons; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer carried his measure in the Lower House by a majority of only five.¹ This was a virtual defeat, and the ministers dropped the Bill, which they had put forth as the leading measure of the session.² On the 12th of June, Lord John Russell moved for a committee to inquire into the management of church-lands, with a view to the improvement of their revenues. He declared that this had no connection whatever with the principle of appropriation; but the Church and the Conservatives believed that it had, and they exerted themselves against it accordingly.³ Three divisions took place on this occasion which show the temper of the House on the question of church-property. A direct proposal on the part of a Radical Reform member, Mr. Harvey, for the abolition of church-rates, was voted down by a majority of 431,—only 58 members voting for the motion. Lord John Russell's motion obtained a majority of 86 in favor of an inquiry into the management of church-lands. Mr. Goulburn proposed an addition of a pledge from Parliament, that any new funds accruing from improved management should be applied to the extension of religious instruction by the clergy to the members of the Established Church alone; and the ministerial majority against the motion was now only 26. From this it appeared that the Church would accept of any improvement of her own revenues; but would neither forego funds derived from the Dissenters, nor extend her expenditure beyond her own members.⁴

Thus stood the matter when the elections took place, after the death of the King. The church-question was the leading one on the hustings; and, though the appropriation question was that by which the ministers had turned out their predecessors, and by which they were pledged to stand or fall, the ministerial majority in Parliament was sensibly lessened in the new House. The government were discouraged accordingly, and they began to draw back from their pledge,—no doubt, from relaxing in their sense of being pledged on behalf of the appropriation principle; and the result was seen in the next session, in a way fatal to their political honor.

On the 27th of March, 1838, Sir Robert Peel inquired of Lord John Russell what course he meant to pursue with regard to Irish tithe; and whether he intended to bring forward the appropriation question again, in accordance with the resolutions of 1835.⁵ The reply was that the ministers intended to place the tithe-question “on a ground altogether new,” as it appeared use-

¹ Annual Register, 1837, 85.

³ Hansard, xxxviii. p. 1384.

⁵ Hansard, xli. p. 1315.

² Hansard, xxxviii. p. 1073.

⁴ Hansard, xxxviii. pp. 1433-1434.

less and irritating, after a conflict of four years, to prolong an argument which produced no result. This announcement, unaccompanied by any hint now of standing or falling by the great principle by which the government had come into office, prepared Sir Robert Peel and the Church-party for their approaching triumph over the honor of their opponents,—the most mournful of triumphs. The estimate of that honor was already so low, that men of every party in the House declared, a few weeks afterwards, that they perceived—some with fear and some with hope—that they saw the appropriation principle lurking amidst the ambiguities of Lord John Russell's new resolutions on the tithe-question; ambiguities which were themselves discreditable on an occasion which was professed to be a decisive one.

On the 14th of May, Sir Thomas Acland moved the rescinding of the celebrated resolutions of the House of April, 1835, in favor of the appropriation question; and then broke out Sir Robert Peel's emotions of triumph.¹ He told the whole story: how he offered to carry a tithe-measure like the present, and was taunted with having derived it from the preceding government; how he was compelled to retire, because such a measure must, on principle, as his opponents said, be connected with appropriation clauses; how those opponents staked their political existence on such a connection; and how they were now proposing to carry the tithe-measure, after all, without the appropriation; introducing it by resolutions so ambiguously worded that no one could be sure of what they meant.² The true reply would have been, that the ministers, finding that they could not stand by their principle, were ready to fall by it; that they had been mistaken about the interest of the public mind in the question, and would accept the consequences of their mistake; and that, having faith in their principle, the only thing impossible to them was to surrender it. Their actual reply was, that their convictions on the question were unaltered; but that they surrendered the principle. Sir Thomas Acland's motion for rescinding the memorable resolutions was lost by a majority of only nineteen.³ When the time arrived for the tithe-debate,—the 2d of July,—the appropriation question was once more brought forward by one who had never wavered upon it, and who was universally admitted to be, from his early action and steady advocacy, the highest authority on the subject,—Mr. Ward. He, too, told the whole story over again; and the effect was withering upon the reputation of the ministers. Referring to a pamphlet which, in 1835, had foretold that Sir Robert Peel

Surrender of
the appropri-
ation prin-
ciple.

Reception
of the sur-
render.

¹ Hansard, xlii. p. 1203.

² Hansard, xlii. p. 1325-1345.

³ Hansard, xlii. p. 1353.

must go out upon this question, he said: "The right honorable baronet adhered to his opinions, sacrificed place and power to his opinions, and ceased to be a Minister; but they must have a new edition of the pamphlet to tell them how those who rose into power upon the right honorable baronet's fall could now adopt his opinions, and make them their rule upon this occasion, and do so without the sacrifice of character and station."¹ The only Minister who offered any reply to Mr. Ward was Lord Morpeth; and he made no reference to the main point of the difficulty.² He dwelt upon the courage and perseverance of ministers in having three times asserted their principle, and on their prudence and love of peace shown in dropping it now; but he said nothing of any obligation to resign. Mr. Ward's motion was, of course, lost by a large majority,—the ministers themselves voting against it. But his speech was not lost; and it has probably not yet fulfilled all its purposes. A principle may be trodden down, but it can never be extinguished. When the one in question revives, and men turn back to the history of the struggle, they may take warning and guidance from the record. While studying it, they will pause upon the words of another highly principled member, Mr. Grote, who said, in regard to this transaction, that it afforded melancholy proof of the way in which great principles were made subservient to party purposes; and that he believed history would note this as one of the most discreditable instances of tergiversation on record.³ The Whig government now evinced a moral scepticism equal to that of Sir James Graham on the same subject. They praised their own "wisdom" in not sacrificing the substance to the shadow, and their devotion to the general good in surrendering a principle which was found not to be generally appreciated.

It is true, the principle was not generally appreciated; and government was not duly supported in upholding it: but not the less for this were the ministers lowered in the estimation of the nation at large. It might be only the thoughtful, and those familiarized with the philosophy of society, who saw the whole scope of the controversy, and were interested in it accordingly: but all could see—and most did see—that the Whig ministry did not govern the people, but was governed by them; and took, not merely suggestion and stimulus from the popular will, but guidance and control. There was less demonstration of disapprobation at the moment than earnest men hoped, and perhaps than the ministers feared; but they never recovered a high position in the respect and confidence of the country.

Such is the history of the appropriation question which determined the return of the Whigs to power in 1835.

¹ Hansard, xliii. p. 1181. ² Hansard, xliii. p. 1184-7. ³ Hansard, xliv. p. 660.

CHAPTER III.

ON their return to power, in April, 1835, the Whig ministers had, as we have seen, promised two leading measures during the session. We have pursued the history of Second great question. one. The other is the large and just measure which, next to reform of Parliament, is their chief title to honorable remembrance. It was during the session of 1835 that the Municipal Reform Bill was carried.

This measure could not precede parliamentary reform; but it was sure to follow it. It could not precede Municipal reform. parliamentary reform, because a large proportion of members were sent by the corrupt boroughs, where corporation abuses were the most flagrant; and to attack those abuses was to attack parliamentary corruption itself, in the presence of the delegates of that corruption. Every borough proprietor and delegate would stand up for his own borough corporation, aided by others to whom he would render a similar service in their hour of need. And the people would not have borne to see the most insignificant boroughs — those which had no parliamentary representation — called to account and laid under discipline, while the great parliamentary towns were passed over. So it was necessary to purge Parliament first of the close-borough class of members before the corporations could be exposed, though the evil of municipal corruption had become well-nigh intolerable for a long course of years. It was not merely the corruption of the old municipal bodies which made their reform a necessary consequence of the regeneration of Parliament: it was also that the people were resolved to possess and use the rights of the franchise provided for them by the Reform Bill, but intercepted by the oppressive maladministration of the borough corporations. The franchise was of little use in a town where the corporate officers elected and re-elected themselves and each other for ever, and employed the trust-funds which should have healed the sick, and sheltered the old, and instructed the young, in bribing a depraved class of electors; where the town-clerks were nominated by the patrons of boroughs, to countenance electoral subserviency, and do the dirty work of venal electioneering; and where the efforts of

honest electors might be neutralized through the public-houses alone, if there were no other way, — the publicans being dependent for their licenses upon justices of the peace, who had, as a body, no relish whatever for freedom of Parliament. Such a state of things could not be tolerated by the men who had won the Reform Bill, with the intention of using it; and the authors of the Reform Bill were gratefully supported by the majority of the middle classes in their first movement in 1833, and their prosecution of the enterprise on their return to power in 1835.

The first move was the appointment of a commission under the great seal to twenty gentlemen, whose charge was “to proceed with the utmost despatch to inquire as to the existing state of the municipal corporations in England and Wales, and to collect information respecting the defects in their constitution; to make inquiry into their jurisdiction and powers, and the administration of justice, and in all other respects; and also into the mode of electing and appointing the members and officers of such corporations, and into the privileges of the freemen and other members thereof, and into the nature and management of the income, revenues, and funds of the said corporations.”

While these twenty gentlemen were about their work, pairing off among the districts into which they had divided England and Wales, how busy were many minds! some with dread of exposure and loss of perquisites; some with calculations how best to make their fortunes by claims for compensation for offices which they saw would be taken from them; some with planning how best to evade or mislead the inquiries of the commissioners, and others how best to stimulate and aid these inquiries; some with the hope of seeing at length a chance allowed for the culture of public and private virtue, through the extinction of borough corruption; others rejoicing to see that the principle of centralization was not to be extended beyond institutions where it was absolutely indispensable; and many, very many, looking back into history with a new interest, whether hopeful or melancholy, now that the time had come for an essential modification of an institution which forms a part of the body of that history from end to end!¹

First, they saw groups of Romans sitting down here and there in the land, and arranging their own local affairs, while living under the general law of Rome. {Then, there were the Saxons, who, on arriving, found the town communities fitted, by their municipal practice, for adaptation to their own more general system of self-government, which extended equally over town and country. \They put their borough-reeve at the head of the town government, — by popular

Rise and history of municipal institutions.

¹ Polit. Dict., ii. 380–385.

election, — as they placed their shire-reeves over the shires, to collect the revenues of the State. And then came the Normans, who no longer permitted the borough-reeve to be elected by his neighbors; but put in his place, a bailiff appointed by the King, as the shire-reeve was superseded by the Viscount. Then appears in the history the way of escape from the oppressions of the bailiff found by the citizens; the offer to the King of a larger sum, to be transmitted direct to his exchequer, than could be collected by the bailiff, who, besides, absorbed some by the way; and, next, there is the ready acceptance of these terms, and the grant of a long succession of charters, granting the boroughs to the burgesses in fee-farm; that is, to be their own, as long as they should punctually pay to the royal exchequer the crown-rent agreed upon. And here, when the relieved inhabitants were returning to their habits of municipal freedom, does the familiar name of mayor first present itself. The Saxon townsmen had no cause to love the title of bailiff; and they took, instead, the Norman name, which signified the chief municipal officer of a town. At this time, the burgesses or townsmen were those who had a settled abode in the town, were members of some one trade-company, and shared in the liberties and free customs of the town. This was, in fact, a household qualification, distinguishing the citizens from temporary residents, — for trade or other purposes, — who neither paid taxes nor enjoyed the privileges of citizenship. The means of obtaining the franchise seem to have arisen simply out of the conveniences of the case. A man's settled residence was most easily ascertained through the circumstances of his birth, apprenticeship, and marriage. A man who obtained trading advantages by a settlement in a particular town would gladly obtain citizenship by purchase. As for obtaining the freedom of any borough through the gift of the inhabitants, it was obviously a substantial advantage in those days, as well as the honor that it is, by traditional associations, in ours. In the time of Edward III., we find an authorization of the residence in towns of men who were not free of the borough, — the citizens being empowered to make them contribute to the public expenditure; and hence it is easily seen how those guilds or trade-companies became important, which verified the position and rights of every resident within the town-walls, and were the settled method of access to the privileges of citizenship. We can see these men and times with the mind's eye; the great middle class, of which history has told so little, busy within their towns, — busy about their private affairs, their manufactures, and their commerce, — busy about their local affairs, their magistracy, their criminals, the defences of their walls, and the amount and management of their funds; and all idle and indifferent about

those wars, those struggles among princes and nobles, of which history tells so much. The chroniclers of the time saw the great movements of the country, — the march of armies, the gatherings of the great barons and their retainers, and the exterminating conflicts on noted fields of battle; but they knew little of the conclaves of townsmen within their walls, to take measures of defence against the threats and exactions of neighboring nobles, for the protection of their ever-expanding commerce, and for the choice of their annual delegate, — their mayor, — who was to be answerable to the King for the payment of the duties to the crown. In course of time, the citizens obtained release from the necessity of sending their chief-magistrate to London, and had permission by charter to take the oaths of their own officers, or to tender them to the constable of the nearest royal castle. Thus far, the functions of the town magistracy were executive only. The making of local laws was a separate affair, and had been managed by general assemblies, weekly or other, which agreed upon regulations binding upon all. As numbers increased, and trade extended, this became inconvenient; and a representative system grew up; and with it a distinction of classes, which originated a town aristocracy, and the danger — which became an abuse, increasing from century to century — of that mutual election and self-election which ripened into our modern and intolerable grievance of close corporations. In Henry III.'s reign, an attempt was made in London by "the more discreet of the city" to elect a mayor in opposition to the popular voice; but the citizens met at St. Paul's Cross, and showed that the innovators were less "discreet" than they had thought themselves. The discreet of the city were happily defeated in their aim. Among the charters of Henry VII., there is one establishing a self-elective council of aldermen in Bristol. But the great contest — the greatest recorded in the history of English municipal institutions — took place after the Reformation, when the question of a Parliament disposed in favor of a Catholic or Protestant occupant of the throne became all-important to government. Then it rested with the sheriffs to declare which were parliamentary and which non-parliamentary boroughs. The parliamentary could not be put down, but less important ones might be raised up; and, in the three reigns succeeding Henry VIII.'s, we find sixty-three places sending members to Parliament which were before, or of late, unrepresented. There was little or no enlargement of popular freedom in this proceeding; for the crown took care that the accession should tell in its own favor. It assumed the right of giving governing charters, by which it controlled municipal operations; most of the new order of charters giving to small councils — of express royal appointment,

and indissoluble self-elective powers — the privilege of local government, and even, in many cases, of election of parliamentary representatives.

(Hence was derived the pernicious power of the Stuarts; and from this period we may date the subjugation of British political independence. The royal and aristocratic power over the commonalty was not overthrown even by the Revolution; for subsequent charters were framed upon the model of those of the Charleses and Jameses; and, as the corporation commissioners tell us in their report, “the charters of George III. do not differ in this respect from those granted in the worst period of the history of these boroughs.”

To those who felt, as well as said, that the welfare of a nation depends on its public and private virtue, who saw that the private vice of a community was found to be in substantial accordance with its municipal corruption, and who looked back through this avenue of history so as to perceive how low our people had sunk from the municipal freedom and purity of long preceding ages, it was consolatory to read the bold exposure of the case by the corporation commissioners, in their report of 1835. Report of commissioners From this report, two commissioners dissented, on grounds which had no influence on subsequent proceedings; and the following statement bears the signatures of sixteen: “Even where these institutions exist in their least imperfect form, and are most rightfully administered, they are inadequate to the wants of the present state of society. In their actual condition, where not productive of evil, they exist, in a great majority of instances, for no purpose of general utility. The perversion of municipal institutions to political ends has occasioned the sacrifice of local interests to party purposes, which have been frequently pursued through the corruption and demoralization of the electoral bodies. In conclusion, we report to Your Majesty, that there prevails among the inhabitants of a great majority of the incorporated towns a general, and, in our opinion, a just dissatisfaction with their municipal institutions, a distrust of the self-elected municipal councils, whose powers are subjected to no popular control, and whose acts and proceedings, being secret, are unchecked by the influence of public opinion, — a distrust of the municipal magistracy, tainting with suspicion the local administration of justice, and often accompanied with contempt of the persons by whom the law is administered, — a discontent under the burdens of local taxation; while revenues that ought to be applied for the public advantage are diverted from their legitimate use, and are sometimes wastefully bestowed for the benefit of individuals, sometimes squandered for purposes injurious to the character and morals of the people. We, therefore, feel it to be

our duty to represent to Your Majesty, that the existing municipal corporations of England and Wales neither possess nor deserve the confidence and respect of Your Majesty's subjects; and that a thorough reform must be effected before they can become, what we humbly submit to Your Majesty they ought to be, useful and efficient instruments of local government."

It is evident at a glance that a thorough reform must meet with vehement opposition. The means of getting up ^{Existing state of things.} such opposition lay mainly in the hands of those whose corruption was to be exposed, and whose gains were to be abolished. In the worst towns, there was the strongest body of corrupt or bigoted officials who held the worst portion of the inhabitants under their control, while those who most desired reform were precisely those who were least in a position to make themselves heard. The noble-minded operative, who had refused 50*l.* for his vote, was borne down by the noisy, tipsy freeman, whose "loyalty" was very profitable to him. The benevolent and painstaking quiet citizen who strongly suspected that the funds of an orphan girls' school went to support a brothel, or who could never obtain admission to a charity trust because it was supposed that he would remonstrate against the frequent banquets at the expense of the trust, — the peaceable Dissenter who found himself put aside in times of public danger, because the loyal corporation charged him with wishing to burn down the cathedral, — the unexceptionable tradesman, who found himself cut out by the idle and unskilful because they had corporation connection, — such men as these had no chance of being heard against the sharp and unscrupulous lawyers, the pompous aldermen, the rabble of venal voters, and the compact body of town-contractors, who clamored, as for life, for the maintenance of things as they were. Then there were the thoughtless and ignorant who loved the city shows, — the mayor's feast, the election processions, the fun and riot of the ward-elections, — the antique pageantry of some old towns, with their grim dragon carried about the streets, and the prancing St. George, and the Whifflers in pink and blue, with their wooden swords; an antique pageantry which wiser people than themselves would be sorry to see no more. And again, there were the anxious Conservatives, and the positive old Tories, who believed that the world would come to an end if long-standing institutions were meddled with. What could the plaints of the sick and the aged and the orphan, and the indignation of the disinterested, and the protest of the excluded, and the appeal of the obscure, do amidst the hubbub of desperate wrong-doers and exasperated haters of change? Hitherto they could do nothing but complain; but now they might hope, and they could speak. In every corporate

town sat men sent on purpose to hear all that could be told. Great was the consternation at first; and fiercer grew the threats and clamor, every day, from the highest to the lowest of those who dreaded change. No one can forget what he saw of the action of opposition in any part of that scale. At the lowest end were the insolent and profligate freemen, who earned bread, and the drink in which they rolled about the streets, by selling their votes, and who would never want a market while the corporate funds remained untouched, and the account-books kept secret. These swaggerers swore to put the Duke of Cumberland on the throne if any ministry dared to look into their resources. At the end of the scale sat he in whom was embodied the rank old Toryism which was only waiting to depart with him from our social life of England. Lord Eldon fitly headed the scale of the angry and the alarmed. "He protested loudly in private," we learn from a contemporary sketch of him, "with feverish alarm," against the measure, "as leading directly to confusion. Its interference with vested rights shocked his sense of equity even more than the sweeping clauses of the Reform Act.¹ To set at nought ancient charters as so many bits of decayed parchment, and destroy the archives of town-halls, seemed in the eyes of the old magistrate, for so many years the guardian of corporate rights, a crowning iniquity. Pale as a marble statue, and confined to his house in Hamilton Place by infirmity, he would deprecate equally the temerity of ministers and the madness of the people; and his vaticinations, like the prophet's scroll, were full to overflowing with lamentation and woe. His correspondence, for some years previously, had borne marks of the troubled gloom with which he viewed the changes gradually darkening over all he had loved and venerated, till he felt almost a stranger to the institutions of his native land."

The opposition was incalculable, and might have been supposed unmanageable; yet, so flagrant were the abuses, that at last it required less than half of one session of Parliament—from June to September—to carry into law a thorough reform of the municipal institutions of England and Wales.

The abolition of abuses, flagrant as they might be, was not, however, the most weighty consideration with the advocates of municipal reform. They had a higher aim ^{Principle of the case.} and hope,—to train the people to self-government, without which parliamentary reform could be little more than a name. (A representative system is worse than a despotism for a nation which has no ideas to represent,—no clear conception of its political duties, rights, and privileges,—no intellect and no conscience in regard to social affairs. The opponents of both par-

¹ Law Magazine, No. xliv.

liamentary and municipal reform feared the ignorance and the self-will of the mass of the people: and not without reason; since the corruption of the representation in both departments had caused the ignorance and aggravated the self-will which were now sure to be displayed. The evil was unquestionable: the question was how to deal with it. Either the people must be governed without participation from themselves, — that is, England must go back into a despotism; or the people must be educated into a capacity for being governed by themselves, through the principle of representation. The only possible education for political, as for all other moral duty, is by the exercise of the duty itself. It was high time to begin the training anew; and those who most clearly saw the necessity were most thoroughly aware of the imperfections which would immediately appear. They knew that the mass of the municipal electors would show much folly, much ignorance, much selfishness, much anger, in the first exercise of new rights; they knew that much nonsense would be talked in the town councils, and that party wrangling would be violent at first; and they no more regarded this as an objection to a reformed system than they looked to school-boys for the discretion and steady conscientiousness of disciplined men. They knew also that time would do its work, in instructing the raw, and giving the wise and disinterested their natural ascendancy over the violent and the corrupt. They were aware that this measure was of the highest importance to the virtue and the liberties of the nation, — the most necessary preparation for all future good, — the seed-field of hope for the future political life of Great Britain; and they gave their efforts to the cause accordingly, with a seriousness and energy which they could never have commanded for the mere abolition of abuses of any enormity. The great virtue of the Reform Bill was its extinction of corruption, and its clearing the ground for a true representation. The Municipal Reform Bill had all that merit, and, besides, the greater one of pressing every man's public duty home to him, and engaging him in its exercise, in his own street, and amidst a community where every face was familiar to him. The work was of the highest order; its scope was fully perceived by the Whig Administration, and it was done by them in the most admirable manner that the times and their position admitted. Great as were some of their objects and achievements during the early years of their rule, it is probable that this reform will, in far future centuries, stand out to view above the rest as the highest, from its connection with the deepest principles of political virtue, and therefore the most lasting system of political liberties.

The most radical imperfection of the scheme, and that which

must subject it to a future reform as sweeping as the last, is its protraction of the severance of the interests of town and country. The Romans, as we have seen, conferred ^{Defects of the reform.} their municipal quality — capacity for civil rights through liability to civil duties — prominently on the inhabitants of towns, where alone institutions of citizenship were established by them during their occupation of Britain. The Saxon system was scarcely cognizant of towns at all; but, when the Saxons came to Britain, they found a system existing in the towns to which theirs was easily adapted; and they did not subvert it. During the feudal ages, all civil rights were concentrated in the towns; so that the very word municipal is to us applicable only to a town-system. As civil war subsided, agriculture rose to the point of superseding mere territorial dignity; and, before the great rise of manufactures, it was the unquestioned leading interest of the commonalty, while closely connected with the territorial dignity of the aristocracy. With the rise of manufactures, a new political era opened in England. For half a century before the reign of William IV., the manufacturing population had been gaining upon the agricultural, at a perpetually increasing rate; and, if the country gentlemen in Parliament who opposed the Municipal Reform Bill had understood their own case, they would rather have striven for some possible inclusion of the rural population in the scheme, than have opposed a reform in the towns. It is an evil all round that the nation should be divided into two populations, the urban and the rural, whose interests are supposed to be antagonistic; and the vehement cries of agricultural distress which had pained the ears of the nation almost without intermission since the peace, seemed to tell that the agricultural interest was certainly not that which was gaining the ascendancy at present. It would have been a vast benefit to all, if the two populations could have been united under a system of local government whose objects are of absolutely universal importance; instead of being separated as peremptorily as ever by the reform of town government, while rural administration remained as before. But neither the Whig ministers, if they had wished it, nor any others, could have effected this in 1835, when the mere mention of such a scheme would have been received as a proposal to subordinate the country to the towns. So the rural population remain in a backward and unfavorable condition, — subject to the jurisdiction of justices of the peace of counties and divisions of counties; while the town population is in the enjoyment of a representative system, which, by improving their intelligence and independence, could not but widen the severance between the two populations, to the disadvantage of the rural, if other influences were not operating, at perhaps an equal rate, on

behalf of the latter. The extension of free-trade to agricultural produce, and the consequent improvement of agricultural science and skill which may with certainty be looked for, are likely to raise the mind and the condition of the rural population, till they may become capable of desiring and requiring for themselves a system of local government as favorable as that obtained by the men of the towns; and then some future government will have to grant to the producers and sellers of food, and the capitalists of their class, the same political scope and privilege which the Bill of 1835 secured to the producers and sellers of all other articles, and the capitalists of their multifarious class.

The other great imperfection of the measure was one only temporary in its character, but of pernicious operation during the critical years when the citizens required every aid, and no hindrance, in learning to discharge their new duties and exercise their new rights,—the privileges of the old freemen were preserved, and with them a large measure of corruption. This was not the work of the Administration, but an amendment insisted on by the Lords. The preservation of the Parliamentary franchise and corporation property of this depraved body has been the greatest impediment to the purifying operation of the measure; but care was taken by the ministers and the House of Commons, that, while existing property and privilege of an objectionable character were tenderly dealt with, no new interests of a similar kind should be permitted to arise; and thus, beneficial as have been the effects of corporate reform from the day that the Bill became law, its best results have yet to be realized.

The substance of the measure, as passed, is this:—

The points for review are four: the area in the State occupied by the system,—the objects of municipal government, —the municipal constituency,—the municipal functionaries.¹

The number of boroughs included under the Bill was 178, and the collective population about 2,000,000 at that time. Of these boroughs, 128 of the most important had a commission of the peace assigned to them; while the other 50 might obtain such a commission on a representation to the crown, by the town-council, that the borough needs the appointment of one or more salaried police-magistrates. London is not included under the Act, a special measure being promised for the metropolis; towards which, however, nothing has yet been done. Of the 178 boroughs, 93 were parliamentary boroughs, and their limits were taken as settled by the Reform Bill. The boundaries of the remaining 85 stood as they were before, until Parliament should

¹ Polit. Dict. ii. pp. 385-3.2.

direct an alteration. Each borough was divided into electoral wards, — Liverpool into 16 ; others into 12, 10, or fewer, till the smallest were reached, which needed no division at all. The boundaries of the wards, and the number of town-councillors to be returned by each, were settled, after the passing of the Act, by barristers appointed for the purpose.

The objects of municipal government were briefly set forth in the King's speech at the close of the session of 1833, in the sentence which recommends Parliament "to mature some measures which may seem best fitted to place the internal government of corporate cities and towns upon a solid foundation, in respect to their finances, their judicature, and their police."¹ The new Act left the old objects untouched, for the most part, except in regard to the administration of justice and of charity trusts. The administration of charity-trust funds was now placed in the hands of trustees appointed by the Lord Chancellor ; and justice was made more accessible, and its functionaries more responsible, by various new provisions. As to the appointment and management of the constabulary, the paving and lighting of the towns, and other duties of the local government, they were not dictated, nor local acts interfered with, by express enactment. The thing to be done was to procure a practical amendment by giving a true constituency to the towns, by which the local authorities should be elected in a genuine manner.

Hitherto, the functionaries made the constituency, and the constituency in return appointed the functionaries ; so that, if a sufficient number of corrupt and indolent men could be got into league, they could do what they pleased with the powers and the funds of the boroughs. This was now amended. The first class considered was that of the existing freemen, whose privilege, having been hitherto much restricted, was supposed to have been valuable, and of proportionate original cost. It was therefore preserved to them, their wives and widows, sons, daughters, and apprentices, who were to enjoy the same privileges in land and property, shares in common lands and public stock of the borough or corporation, as if the new Act had never been passed ; but, henceforward, the debts of the corporation were to be paid before, and not after as hitherto, the claims of such persons were satisfied. The parliamentary franchise was also, as we have said, preserved to the old freemen. But the way to further abuse was stopped, not only by creating an honest constituency, which should swamp the corrupt old one, but by a provision that no rights of borough freedom should henceforth be acquired by gift or purchase, or in any other modes than those now enacted. The Act prescribes a property qualification, on the understood

¹ Hansard, xx. p. 905.

ground that the municipal funds are provided by the propertied classes, who ought therefore to have the disposal of them. The condition of a three years' residence was much objected to by men here and there of all parties; but it was believed to be necessary to obviate sudden and large creations of voters for party purposes, — an evil of which government had had recent and inconvenient experience, the admissions of freemen in certain towns in England having been six times as many in 1830 as in the preceding year. If a necessity, however, the restriction is a bad necessity; and it will probably be repealed when the purification of municipal government has become assured. To be a municipal constituent, a man must be of full age; must, on the last day of the preceding August, have occupied premises within the borough continuously for the three previous years; must have been for those three years an inhabitant householder within seven miles of the borough; and must have been rated to the poor, and have paid those and all borough-rates during the same three years. Such was the constituency ordained by the new Act, — a narrow one, but good as far as it goes, and understood to be so restricted on account of previous abuses.

The registration of the constituency was to be managed by an organization resembling that under the Reform Bill, with the variations rendered necessary by difference of circumstances. The overseers of parishes make the lists; the town-clerk corrects and publishes them; and, since the first year, the mayor and the assessors appointed for the purpose have revised them.

The functionaries of town corporations and their constituents had hitherto borne a strange variety of titles in different places. Henceforth they were everywhere to be called "the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses." This body was henceforth a constituted corporation, empowered to do all legal acts as a body, and not as individuals; to sue and be sued by the corporate name; and to transmit their corporate rights to their corporate successors. The town-council is the great ruling body of the borough. The wards elect the councillors; whose number was, as has been said, apportioned, after the passing of the Act, by barristers who visited the boroughs for the purpose. The council administers, by its committees, all the local business, — the constabulary appointments, and the paving and lighting; and the body in conclave appoint their own officers, decree the expenditure of the borough fund, and the leasing of land and buildings; and they have the power of making by-laws for the prevention and suppression of nuisances, and other objects of minor legislation. All needful safeguards against corruption are provided by making committees responsible to the whole council, by the appointment of auditors of accounts, who shall not themselves be councillors at the time,

and by the regulations that all town accounts shall be published; that two-thirds of the council shall be present at the passing of any by-law, and that forty days shall be allowed to the Secretary of State to object to such by-law, and procure its disallowance by the sovereign. A property qualification for the office of councillor is requisite. One-third of the council go out, and are supplied by annual election on the 1st of November.

The mayor is chosen from among the councillors; and he must serve, or pay a fine of 100*l.* He presides over the public acts of the borough during his year of office; is, for that time and the next year, a justice of the peace; revises the registration with the assessors, and sanctions the lists by his signature in open court; and is made returning-officer on occasion of election to Parliament.

The function of alderman is somewhat anomalous under the new Act; into which it was introduced by the Lords, more, as it appears, from a clinging to old names and forms than from any clear idea of what there was for aldermen to do. By their remaining in office six years, and half going out every three years, while their body includes one-third of the whole council, the regulation for replenishing the council by new members to the number of one-third annually is set aside. They are little more than councillors having precedence of others, and being removable at the end of six years, instead of three.

The town-clerk and treasurer are appointed by the council. The first has to keep in safety the charter-deeds and records of the borough; to make out the registration lists; keep the minutes of the council, and be subject to their direction. The treasurer is responsible for his accounts to the auditors, to whom he is to submit them half-yearly. The auditors are annually elected by the burgesses on the 1st of March. The assessors are elected in like manner.

The power was reserved to the Crown of appointing such justices of the peace as Government may think proper, also such salaried police-magistrates as the borough may apply for; and, again, a recorder for a single borough, or for two or more in conjunction, provided the councillors of such town or towns desire to have a recorder, show cause for such an appointment, and prove that they can pay his salary. Boroughs having a recorder have separate courts of quarter-sessions of the peace; such courts being co-equal in powers with similar courts for counties.

All church property in the hands of the old corporations was required to be sold under the direction of the ecclesiastical commissioners; the proceeds to be invested in government securities, and the annual interest to form a part of the borough fund.

Towns not at that time incorporated might obtain a charter of incorporation by petition to the Privy Council. Some of the largest towns in England obtained charters by this method within a few years after the passing of the Act.

It was on the 5th of June that Lord John Russell introduced the Municipal Reform Bill to the House of Commons.

The Bill in the Commons. By the cordial union of the Whig and Radical parties, it was passed rapidly and safely through the Lower House. The

In the Lords. difficulty was with the Peers, who carried one amendment after another against ministers; and among

others, a decision to hear counsel for the existing corporations, which delayed the progress of the measure for some time. The opposition was, as might be expected, about the rights of property, — the property of poor men, it was insisted, and therefore to be the more carefully regarded; and about the overthrow of ancient practices and observances. But the case was too bad for a destructive opposition. As for the rights of property of the poor, — in the city of Norwich, there were 3225 resident freemen, of whom 315 were paupers; 808 more were not rated. In Lincoln, nearly four-fifths of the population were excluded from the corporation; and of the corporate body, three-fourths paid no rates. At Cambridge, out of 20,000 inhabitants, there were only 118 freemen. At Ipswich, of 2000 rate-payers, only 187 belonged to the corporation.¹ In the face of these facts, it was a mockery to talk of the rights of property being disregarded by the Bill. As to the ancient practices and observances, it was only necessary to look back into history to see that the existing state of things was in fact a mass of modern innovation and corruption, and that the Bill was a restoration of ancient rights, — a recurrence to the true old municipal principle. From a conviction that the fact was so, and that the true old principle would, in a generation or two, work itself clear of the mischief of the Lords' amendments, the ministers, after due consideration, adopted those amendments rather than lose the measure. So they preserved the existing race of poor freemen, who must die out in a few years; let in the anomalous aldermen, in the hope that their uselessness, and the evil of breaking in on the rotation of the town-councillors, would be ascertained before long; yielded some points in regard to qualification, and It becomes law. induced the Lords to yield some of their points; and finally passed the Bill on the 7th of September. On the 9th, it became law.

The passage of the Bill was a severe and unexpected blow to the high Tory party, who had confidently reckoned on its being rejected by the Commons when returned from the Upper House.

¹ Corporation Commissioners' Report.

After all that they had done, they found that their staff of magistracy was swept away, to be succeeded by responsible officials returned by a genuine principle of election. The corrupt officeholders under the old system saw with dismay, that the church and charity funds, which had given them so much power and profit, were now to be publicly administered for the general good, and that borough property would be henceforth the property of the borough, and the police the servants of the public and not theirs. As Colonel Sibthorp expressed it, these exclusive privileges were gone "at one fell swoop," — as O'Connell expressed it, "tag-rag and bobtail was swept away." The rejoicing among the honest and enlightened townsmen of the kingdom was naturally great. Yet, perhaps, there were few, even of the most joyous, who did not feel more or less regret at some of the adjuncts of the change; at the extinction, for instance, of antique municipal observances and shows. It was a great thing to see ancient charities renovated, schools and asylums rising again, and coffers filling with money restored to the purposes of the needy. It was a great thing to see our country planted over with little republics, where the citizens would henceforth be trained to political thought and public virtue; but it seemed a pity that the city feasts must go, — the processions be seen no more, — the gorgeous dresses be laid by, — the banners be folded up, — the dragon be shelved, and St. George never allowed to wear his armor again; and the gay runners, in their pink and blue jerkins, their peaked shoes and rosettes, and their fearful wooden swords, turned into mere weavers, tinmen, and shoemakers. Already, some of us may find ourselves discoursing eagerly to children, as Englishmen used to do to wondering Americans, of the sights we once saw on great corporation days; and, when we are dead, a future generation may turn over the municipal wardrobes before their colors are faded, and cast a glance over the mayors' bills of fare, and ask whether such things could have belonged to common life in the nineteenth century. These things, from being once solemn and significant, may have become child's play, of which we of the nineteenth century ought to have been ashamed; yet there are perhaps few of us that were not sorry to see them go. For once, Lord Eldon was not without general sympathy.

CHAPTER IV.

AMIDST the existing state of feeling with regard to the Church, its wealth and its inefficiency for the religious instruction and guidance of the people, it was impossible for any government to feel or assume indifference to its condition. We find, therefore, both the administrations of 1835 issuing an ecclesiastical commission, for the purpose of inquiring into and reporting upon the changes which might be effected in regard to church territory, income, and patronage, so as to render remuneration and labor more commensurate with each other, to enforce residence, and destroy the necessity of pluralities, by providing for all a sufficient revenue. Both commissions — the one issued by Sir R. Peel in February, and the other by Lord Melbourne in June — were publicly objected to by parties within the Church, ranging from Dr. Pusey to Sydney Smith; while those outside the Church, constituting nearly half the population between the Land's End and John o' Groat's, regarded the matter with no great interest, because with little hope. Dr. Pusey and his High-Church party denied the right of the government to meddle with the distribution of church offices and funds; and Sydney Smith, in a series of published letters, complained of the commission being composed chiefly of the high dignitaries of the Church, whose judgment might, he thought, have been beneficially aided by information and suggestion from a lower order of clergy, more conversant with the minds and the needs of the people. Those outside the pale of the Establishment, knowing that the appropriation principle was not to be named, expected little from a mere redistribution of office and funds, made by the highest holders of office and income; and, to the people at large, the most interesting part of the whole matter was the conspicuous fact that the Church was at last compelled to undertake its own reform, — or what its dignitaries conceived to be so. Startling evidences of popular ignorance and the blindest fanaticism were forcing themselves on universal attention, just at the time when the publication of the revenues of the Church was prompting the question, how it was possible that an Establishment so rich in men and money could exist beside a population in a state

of such heathen blindness. The ecclesiastical commission of 1831 had declared the gross revenues of the Established Church in England and Wales to amount to 3,792,885*l.*; and the net revenue, to 3,490,497*l.*¹ During the ensuing years of inquiry and legislation, men did not forget that the net revenue of the English Church amounted to three millions and a half; and, while they were waiting to see how these funds would be dealt with, events were continually occurring to show what ought to be done with them.

Without going over again the sickening record, found in the register of almost every year, of ignorance and fanaticism shown in disturbances requiring repression by ^{Popular} ~~ignorance.~~ soldiery and punishment by the law, we may refer to one event which seemed to occur, as was said in Parliament, for the shaming of the Church. We find too much besides, — we find a rector of Lockington tithing the wages of a poor laborer, named Dodsworth, and throwing him into jail for the sum of four shillings and fourpence. We find church-rate riots abounding, — the panelling of pews broken in, and men exchanging blows in the church with fists and cudgels. We find revivals of religion taking place here and there, — scenes worthy only of a frantic heathenism, — scenes of raving, of blasphemous prayer, of panic-struck egotism, followed by burial-processions to lay in the ground the victims of apoplexy or nervous exhaustion. We find men selling their wives in the market-places, with halters round their necks, — none of the parties having the remotest conception of what marriage is in the eye of the law or of the Christian religion. We find crowds, in such a place as Sheffield, gutting, and repeatedly firing, the Medical School, through the old prejudices against dissection. But all these incidents, and many others of like nature with them, wrought less on the public mind, to the shame of the Church, than an event which happened in 1838, almost under the shadow of Canterbury Cathedral. That in such a neighborhood a large body of the common ^{Courtenay} ~~delusion.~~ people should believe a lunatic to be the Messiah, and follow him to death through such a series of observances as only a lunatic could have imposed, was a shock to the clergy, it was believed; and was certainly a subject of painful amazement to the rest of the world, which was not at all solicitous to keep its opinion to itself. From the House of Commons to the wayside inn, men were asking what the Church was for, and what the clergy could be about, if the population of a district near Canterbury could worship the wounds in the hands and side of a raving lunatic; see him fire a pistol at a star, and bring it down; believe him invulnerable, and themselves through him; expect

¹ Polit. Dict. i. p. 853.

to see him sail away, as he declared he came, on clouds of glory through the heavens; and, when he was shot dead, be quite happy in the certainty that he would rise again in a month.

This poor wretch, named Thom, had been confined in a lunatic asylum for four years, and was then delivered over to his friends on the supposition of his being harmless. He then called himself Sir William Courtenay, fancying himself a man of high family, as well as large estates; in the same breath, claiming to be the Messiah, and threatening hell-fire against all who would not follow him to obtain his estates and get rich themselves. He did not want for followers; for, as the people said about his knowledge of the Scriptures, "no unlearned person could stand before Sir William."¹ He fired a pistol against himself, and was not wounded, — there being no bullet; he put a lighted lucifer-match under a bean-stack, which did not burn: and these things were regarded as true miracles by his followers. They believed that nothing could hurt them while following him; and, when a mother could not refuse to recognize the wounds of her son, she comforted herself that he was "fighting for his Saviour." They kissed the madman's feet, and worshipped him. A woman followed him on the last day of his life, wherever he went, with a pail of water, because he had said that if he died, and if she put water between his lips, he would rise again in a month. He administered the sacrament to his followers in bread and water. As he lay dead, his blouse was torn up, that his followers might carry away the shreds as relics. The strongest rebuke to the Church, however, was at the funeral. From the fear of attack, and rescue of the body, there was a race to the churchyard, — a trial of speed between the funeral-van and the attendant gigs and carts; but, far worse, the clergyman felt it necessary to omit those parts of the burial-service which relate to the resurrection of the dead. Many stolid and miserable wretches were watching the interment from the railing, — some ghastly from wounds received in the fight; and the clergyman feared that any promise of a resurrection would make them watch for the return of their prophet, to reign in the Powderham estates, float in the clouds, and give to each of his true followers a farm of forty acres. It was long before the clergy of Canterbury heard the last of this. In the affair of this madman and his pretensions, ten lives were lost in a few moments, and many persons were wounded. The party of fanatics had strolled about the country for four days, praying, obtaining recruits, and looking for the millennium. A farmer, whose men had been seduced from their work, gave information to the police. The first constable who presented himself was shot, by Thom himself, who then took his sword, and

¹ Spectator, 1835, p. 530.

hacked the body, crying out, "Now am I not your Saviour?" A party of military was brought from Canterbury, whose officer, Lieutenant Bennett, was deliberately shot dead by the same hand. The lunatic himself was the next to fall, crying with his last breath, "I have Jesus in my heart." The local jails were filled with his followers, who were too ignorant to wonder at what they had done, even after the discovery that their leader and companions could be wounded and die. Some were transported for life, or for terms, and the rest imprisoned for different periods. They were now at last brought, under such circumstances as these, under the care of the Church, by which they should have been instructed and guided from their youth up; and, at the end of a year's imprisonment, some of them signed a paper declaratory of their shame and sorrow at their impious delusion, and at the acts to which it had led them.¹ Some, who could not sign their names, declared the same among their old neighbors. Very few of the band could read and write.

It was not likely that such evils as were indicated by this event would be reached by a commission of church dignitaries inquiring into property and income, and unpractised in dealing with the popular mind; but, small as was the expectation of all parties, the result in eight years disappointed even that. The number of benefices and churches whose incomes had been augmented by the ecclesiastical commissioners for England, was, in that time, 469; and the augmentation amounted, in the whole, to the sum of 25,779*l*.² The Church would certainly not save the people or itself in this way; and it was well that other measures were attempted.

The ecclesiastical commissioners were incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1836; their number then consisting of Results of the thirteen, and including several members of the gov-
commission. ernment. One of their first operations was a re-arrangement of episcopal sees. Two new sees — those of Ripon and Manchester — were created; and four of the old ones were consolidated into two, — Gloucester being united to Bristol, and St. Asaph to Bangor. After this, the chief work of the commissioners was making the redistribution, whose result, after eight years, has been mentioned. It was felt by most reasonable people that the less they expected the better, after hearing that the commissioners did not find that any process of redistribution could render the income of the bishoprics sufficient for the wants of the bishops; the number of bishops being twenty-six, and the amount of income nearly 150,000*l*. per annum.³ Church reformers who made such a declaration as this were not the kind

¹ Annual Register, 1839, Chron. 134.

² Polit. Dict. i. 802.

³ Polit. Dict. i. 385.

of reformers who would secure the peasantry of England against seduction by future maniacs and blasphemers. Something more than this must be done.

In 1838, an Act passed, the object of which was to correct the abuse of non-residence, — to render it impossible henceforth for the beneficed clergyman to be absent, at his own pleasure, from the field of his duties, while enjoying the proceeds of his living. If absent for between three months and six, for other than professional purposes, without a license, he must forfeit a third of the income from his benefice; if between six and eight months, half the income; if twelve months, three-fourths of the income. These requisitions were not new; but they were to be fenced about with strong securities. Before granting the license, the bishop must be satisfied that the intended absentee has provided a proper substitute, duly salaried. Other regulations came in with this, — methods by which the bishop can keep himself informed of the condition of the parishes under the care of his clergy, and not only check the tempting practice of non-residence, but form some idea of the state of the relation between the pastors and their flocks. This was a great improvement, not only as securing to the flocks the presence of their pastors, but as discouraging the entrance into the service of the Church of men who have no taste for its duties, but come in merely for a maintenance. The condition of residence is as terrible or disgusting to such a class of clergy as it is welcome to those who are worthy of their function. Great as this improvement was, much more was wanted; and, two years after, another considerable step was taken.

In 1840, an Act was passed which made a great sweep of abuses, and applied the accruing funds to good purposes.¹ It abolished many ecclesiastical sinecures, or deprived the holders of their emoluments; it abolished the old self-elected deans and chapters, decreeing that deans should be appointed by the crown, and canons by the bishops; it authorized the purchase and suppression of sinecure-rectories in private patronage, and the devotion of the proceeds to the spiritual wants of the people at hand or elsewhere. All the profits arising from these proceedings were to form a fund at the disposal of the commissioners, for the supply of the most pressing spiritual needs which came to their knowledge. There was a good deal of outcry, from the clergy as well as others, about granting such powers as this Bill conveyed to such a body of functionaries — placed so high above the level of popular feeling — as constituted the ecclesiastical commission. Pages might be filled with the remonstrances, serious and jocose, of Sydney Smith upon the occa-

¹ Polit. Dict. i. 801.

sion; and there was much truth in the objections which he made: but it was so great a thing to get rid of so much scandal, to sweep away so much abuse, and administer a stern rebuke to the sine-curists of the Church and their patrons, that the Act was, on the whole, regarded as the most considerable advance yet made by the commission towards a reform of the Church. As far as it went, it was a clearing of the ground. But this, after all, was a small matter; and more must be done.

The Tithe-commutation Act for England and Wales, which passed in 1837, was a great promoter of peace and good-will between the Church and the people at large. Tithe-commutation Act. From year to year, the irritation on both sides on the subject of tithes had become more and more intolerable; and, as we have seen, in one place a peasant was shooting his rector, and in another a rector was tithing the peasant's wages and throwing him into jail for the sum of 4s. 4d. Such things have not been heard of since; for the admirable measure of 1837 has put an end to the quarrelling which was discreditable enough to the nation, and perfectly scandalous in connection with the Church. Tithe, not being a tax paid to government, nor to any institution, but to almost as many lay as clerical individuals, could not be swept away or repealed like an ordinary tax. It had become so mixed up with a mass of interests and affairs, that its abolition could not have been effected but by a confiscation which would have put the gain into the pockets of men who had no business with it. The true method was to convert tithe into a rent-charge; and this was done in a very effective manner.¹ The charge, payable in money, was determined by the average price of corn for the seven preceding years; and all kinds of tithe were to come under this arrangement. Every facility was given for a voluntary agreement between the tithe-owner and payer; and both were, in a large number of cases, glad to settle their disputes upon this basis; but if, after the lapse of a sufficient time, no such agreement was made, the tithe-commissioners had power to enforce it. In eight years from the passing of the Act, about half the business of assigning and apportioning rent-charges throughout the kingdom was completed; and a very large proportion of the agreements was voluntary. Provision was made for a redemption of the tithe-charge, where desired; the payer being authorized to make over land to the owner, not exceeding twenty acres in one parish, in purchase of his release from tithe-charges for ever. This power of redemption, though good, was less valuable than it would have been thought at an earlier date. Formerly, men would have sacrificed much to free themselves from the perplexing and galling uncertainty of tithe-charges,

¹ Polit. Dict. ii. 812.

which prevented them from undertaking improvements, or deprived them of all the profit. But now the uncertainty and malicious incidence of the tax were removed by its conversion into a rent-charge, on a broad and ascertainable basis. Here, again, was a great clearing of the ground for improvement of the relation between the Church and the people. But it was not enough: the worst evils remained; and there were some at the time who expressed their sense of these evils in the words of Milton, which tell how the poor "sit at the foot of a pulpit divine to as little purpose of benefiting, as the sheep in their pens at Smithfield."

The desideratum was a system of education. Everybody knew this; that is, everybody knew that the great mass of the working-classes, and all the vast pauper-class of England, were deplorably ignorant. But who could say what was to be done, while the Church did not educate its own body, and yet rose up in opposition at every mention of a plan which did not give the control and administration of education to the clergy, and the Dissenters could not possibly agree to any such condition? The Dissenters exerted themselves much more than the Church to educate the children within their respective bodies; but, besides that the instruction they could give was desultory, partial, and superficial, those bodies did not comprehend the most ignorant and destitute classes,—the very poor agricultural laborers and the abandoned of the towns, who belonged to no religious denomination at all. The majority of all denominations objected to secular education; and on any system of religious instruction they could not agree. In various parts of the Continent, the spectacle might be seen of children sitting on the same bench, Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, having their understandings opened, their consciences awakened, and their affections flowing out upon one another, with a prospect before them of co-operation in their future lives; the duties of citizenship rendered easy by associations of school-days, and purged from the sectarian taint that renders English society an aggregate of bodies which distrust and dislike each other, through prejudices sent down from generation to generation. But among us such a spectacle could not be hoped for; for no subject is less understood by our nation at large than that of religious liberty. Religious liberty could not become understood but by improved general education; and general education could not be had for want of religious liberty. It was truly a desperate case. We have seen how fruitlessly efforts had been made, by Mr. Brougham and others, to extinguish this fatality; and, while such efforts resulted only in increased positiveness and bitterness on every hand, thousands and tens of thousands of children had

been passing off into a condition of hopeless ignorance and depravity, amidst which the most erroneous views of the Christian religion would have been as the dayspring from on high to those who sit in darkness. Combined with what else they would have learned, there were no views of Christianity which could have been imparted in England that would not have been salvation to the host of children in the Durham coal-pits, and the wilds of Wales, and the hovels of Dorsetshire, and the cellars of Liverpool, and the precincts of Canterbury, and the rookeries of London, who have sunk, the while, into abysses of guilt and misery, through the neglect of the State, of which they were the helpless and unconscious members. The high honor of being the first to lay a hand on the barrier of exclusion belongs to the Whig Administrations of this period. It was little that they could do; and that little could not expand into an effective system. From the nature of the case, their plan could be but of temporary duration, as well as most restricted operation; for they could only help those who could, more or less, help themselves; whereas the aid was needed especially by those who were unconscious of their own need: but, if they could drive in only a little wedge which must be thrown away, it was they who found the crevice, and struck the first blow.

It was the fashion of the time to laugh at the Whig Administrations for their resort to special commissions, — a resort, however, for which the country is much indebted to them. That they did not employ this method, in the early days of their rule, as a preparation for an educational system, while they used it with eminent success in their poor-law and municipal reforms, is an indication of their hopelessness about establishing a system at all. Without a full and protracted inquiry, the results of which should be offered in a comprehensive report, no measure could be framed which had a chance of working well. The question of endowments was under investigation; and nothing could be proposed about funds till the results of that inquiry were known. The actual state of education was not ascertained; nor had the Legislature any definite notions as to the kind and degree of education which should be desired or attempted for the people at large. It was a rare thing to meet with an English gentleman, in or out of Parliament, who had any clear views on the question of State or voluntary education, — which was best for us in itself, — which was most procurable for us, — and whether they should, could, or might be in any degree united. Such a “Whig commission” as it was the fashion of the day to laugh at, would have brought knowledge to legislators, and made them think and discuss till their minds had attained some clearness. The public attention would have been fixed, and its interest

roused, by the same means; and in a few years — perhaps two or three — the matter would have been ripe for legislation. But it was clear that ministers dared not employ this method. Parliament, being yet blind to the importance of the project, would have complained of the expense; the Church would have risen up to oppose an invasion of what she considered her province; and the Dissenters would, as we see by the light of a later time, have attacked with fury any proposal to modify their operations among the young of their own sects. So, nothing was said about any broad plan of an extensive commission, with a view to future legislation; and ministers and Parliament could learn only from such information as came in through the Factory Inspectors, the Charity and Poor-law Commissioners, and the witnesses who gave testimony before an education committee of the House of Commons in 1834–5.

Lord Brougham ventured to proceed, upon the partial and most imperfect information thus obtained, to form and propose to Parliament a scheme of national education in the session of 1837; and the result was what might have been anticipated, — a plan too crude for adoption. His plan would have placed the school-system under the control of the Administration of the day, while leaving it subject to the worst evils of voluntarism; and thus it could never have commanded general confidence, while it left unsolved the sectarian difficulties which have been the chief embarrassment throughout. There were yet other objections, so evident to those who knew most on the subject of which all knew but too little, that the measure, introduced in two succeeding years, was dropped without a contest. What the ministers did was very modest in comparison with this; and, modest as their effort was, it cost them so much trouble and opposition, that no one will venture to say they could have done more.

As we have seen, a committee of the Commons sat during two sessions, to receive and report upon evidence as to the condition of education. This is a subject quite unmanageable by a parliamentary committee, by its vastness, and the impossibility of securing an average — a true representation — of witnesses. The committee, therefore, was of little use, except as an evidence that the great subject of education was becoming really interesting to the Legislature. In 1834, the government obtained from Parliament the first grant in aid of education. It was only 20,000*l.*; but it was a beginning, and it went on through subsequent years till 1839, when a vote of 30,000*l.* was asked for. The grant was distributed in different proportions through the National-School Association, which was in strict connection with the Church of England, and the British and

Foreign School Society, which admitted children of all Christian denominations, without imposing upon them sectarian teaching. The method of distribution was by giving aid to applicants in proportion to the amounts which those applicants could prove themselves able to raise for the building of school-houses. It is obvious at a glance, that on this principle aid is given precisely where it is least wanted, — to districts which can raise funds for educational purposes; while the poorest and most neglected could proffer no claim. After a few years, the educational committee of the Privy Council resolved that the principle of giving most where most could be raised on the spot should not be invariably adhered to, if applications should be made from very poor and populous districts, where subscriptions could not be obtained to a sufficient amount. As to the desolate districts where there was no one to stir at all amidst the deadness of ignorance and poverty, there was no provision made for them. To those that had much, more was to be given; and to those that had less, was less to be given; and to those who had nothing, nothing. One beneficent work which the annual parliamentary grant — still annually disputed, however, and therefore uncertain — enabled the ministers to effect, was the establishment and organization of a model school, from which might descend long generations of schools for the training of teachers. In 1835, 10,000*l.* was expressly voted by Parliament for this object; and, in 1839, the committee of Privy Council expressed their regret, that, owing to the sectarian difficulties of the case, they could not propose a plan for the establishment of a normal school under the care of the State, instead of that of a voluntary association.¹

Opposition was made at every step. Lord Stanley even declared, in 1839, that the grant of 10,000*l.* for a normal school, in 1835, was made at a late period of the session, when members were not duly vigilant. When, in 1839, an Order in Council vested the management of the education-fund in a committee of Privy Council, instead of the Lords of the Treasury, in whose hands it had hitherto been, the sharpest debate, and that which most clearly revealed the difficulties of the case, took place in both Houses, and led to a severe retort from the government. On Lord John Russell moving for the grant, Lord Stanley moved an amendment proposing an address to the Sovereign to rescind the Order in Council for the appointment of the Board of Privy Council.² A debate, which was renewed at intervals for some weeks, brought out the views of a variety of members on the whole education question; and the reader sees, with a sort of amazement, that a member here and there set himself to prove that in France there was least crime where ignorance was most

¹ Minute, June 3d, 1839.

² Hansard, *xlvi.* p. 229.

dense, and desired the House to infer that the innocence of the masses was in proportion to their inability to read and write. In the Commons, the ministers obtained their grant by a majority of only two ; and, in the Lords, an address to the Sovereign, like that proposed by Lord Stanley, moved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, was carried by a majority of 111.¹ The Lords carried up the address ; sincerely believing, no doubt, that they were rescuing their young Queen and the State from the guilt and danger of countenancing dissent by permitting any portion of the parliamentary grants to reach the schools of the British and Foreign Society through the hands of members of the Privy Council. But they received their rebuke from the clear voice of their young Queen ; who saw, under the guidance of her ministers, the full enormity of the claim of the Church to engross the education of the nation. There was nothing in the present condition of the people, — about Canterbury, for instance, as people were saying, — or of the National Schools, to induce a belief that the Church was fulfilling well the function which it claimed ; but if it had, — if the education in those schools had been as good as it then was proved to be bad, and if the Church had been really educating all who did not expressly belong to dissenting bodies, — the claim of the Church, that the government should not countenance and aid the efforts of Dissenters, by sending help through the hands of the Privy-Council committee, was too monstrous not to be rebuked as it was by the royal reply.² The Queen was sensible of their Lordships' zeal for religion and the Church ; was always happy to have their advice, yet thought it a matter of regret that they should have thought it necessary to offer it now ; was deeply aware of her duties to the Church, in sanctioning the very measure in question ; reminded their Lordships that by annual reports they would always know what was done by the committee, and have opportunity for objection or control ; and, finally, hoped that it would appear that the grants had been expended with strict fidelity to the purposes of Parliament, to the rights of conscience, and the security of the Established Church.

The clergy, with few exceptions, henceforth refused to permit participation in these grants ; and the quarrel between the Church and the government, in regard to the principles of administration of the grants for education, has been revived, from time to time, and is not settled at this day. One good result of the proceedings of the session of 1839 was, that a strong effort was made to extend, and also to improve, the National Schools. The Church-party wished to test and bring out the strength of its own body ; and also to compensate the clergy who had conscientiously refused

¹ Hansard, xlviii. p. 1332.

² Annual Register, 1839, p. 171.

participation in the government grants. The chief solace to the observer of these melancholy contentions of bigotry with the needs of the time was in seeing how the Church became roused to some sense of her duty towards the ignorant and the poor, and how the great subject of popular education was at last making its way to the front on the platform of public interests. The struggle with which each step was attended showed, in a stronger light than any one had anticipated, the utter blindness of a large number of educated Protestants, in or outside of the British Parliament, to the rights of the universal human mind and conscience, — of the mind to knowledge, and of the conscience to equal liberty; but the more this blindness was exhibited, the less mischief there was in it, and the more likely were the friends of popular enlightenment to understand and agree how to proceed.

Among these friends of popular enlightenment must certainly be considered the Melbourne Administration and that which succeeded it. The Whig ministers made the beginning which has been detailed; and their successors carried out their plan with a zeal and fidelity for which they merited and obtained high honor. By this scheme the Church was offered the opportunity which she seemed to need for regaining some of the honor she had lost, and retrieving some of the disgrace under which she lay at this particular period: but she could not accept the opportunity; and, while torn more fiercely every year by the conflicts of parties within her own pale, — her very bishops being by this time arrayed against each other as favorers or repressers of "Tractarianism," — she was dissolving the traditional associations of respect and awe in the minds of the nation at large by her practical opposition to popular enlightenment. Such reforms, however, as she permitted in the working of her own affairs were already operating for good; and it is the recorded opinion of some of her highest dignitaries, that the preservation of the very existence of the Church of England is owing to the Melbourne Administration. Those who may not agree in such an opinion yet, may and do now see that that Administration was really most friendly to the Church, precisely in insisting on those measures which the Church most vehemently opposed. If, for one instant, they had yielded to the control of the Church the parliamentary grant for education, they would have done as much for her speedy destruction, as they could have done for her stability and prosperity if they had been able to carry their appropriation principle.

CHAPTER V.

To the contemplative philosopher, nothing is more striking, throughout the whole range of human life, than the universal tendency of men to overrate the relative importance of the business under their hand. It would be unreasonable to quarrel with this tendency, — evidence though it be of human fallibility and blindness; it would be unreasonable to quarrel with it, while human faculties are what they are, — able to work but slowly, and within a very limited range; because the stimulus of hope and confidence is necessary to impel men to do all that they can; whereas they would sink down in the inaction of discouragement if they could see at the moment the actual proportion that their deeds bear to their needs. Children would never learn to read first, and then would never learn the grammar of a new language, if they were aware beforehand what a language is, and what a work it is to master its structure and its signs: it is by seeing only the page before them, by not looking beyond the task of the hour, that they accomplish the business at last; and it is not till they have become men that they apprehend the philosophy of their achievement, and learn to be grateful that they did not recognize it sooner. Thus it is in the great sphere of politics, where the wisest men are but children, working their way to achievement with more or less of the confidence of simplicity, — a simplicity which the ordinary life of man is too short to convert into a power of philosophical retrospect. In the longer life of a nation, this power of philosophical retrospect belongs to a future generation; and it is very interesting to the thoughtful of each generation to contemplate the confident satisfaction of their forefathers in the belief that they had set things straight as they went, and compassed the whole of the business which was under their hand. How complete did the Reformation appear to those who wrought it! How confident were they that Romanism was subordinated to Protestantism for ever! whereas our own time has taught us that the work was not only incomplete, but certainly insecure, and possibly transient. How complete did the Revolution of 1688 appear to those who wrought and witnessed it! How confident were they that good principles of government

were firmly established by it! Yet we see how not only those principles might be evaded, but how the most important part of the work, the government of the towns, was left in a state of corruption as dire as all the Stuarts had made it. How complete did the work of Catholic Emancipation appear to those who emancipated the Catholics; and how confidently did they, and their supporters of the Liberal party, conclude that the tranquillization of Ireland was achieved! Yet the mere use of the terms "tranquillization of Ireland" now appears a mockery. To a future generation, the most astonishing part of the whole business will be, that the men of 1829 could be such children as thus to overrate the importance of a single act, great as the act might be. Again, how confident were the Whigs of 1832 of the finality of the reform measure; and those who were less childish than this were themselves as childish in supposing that the nation was settled and satisfied for a time, — safe at least from revolution; and that further reforms might proceed with regularity, in the midst of security. In a spirit of security, the intelligence of the kingdom prosecuted its work, — the government achieving political and social reforms, the Church carrying on ecclesiastical reforms; and the Liberal parties, in and out of Parliament, proposing and maturing schemes for the orderly and regular removal of abuses and obstructions, as if the deposits of the corruptions and miseries of centuries were not still present in their midst, working towards explosions which might shatter our polity to fragments in a day. Already we begin to see — what will be seen much more clearly a hundred years hence — that those who lived in the years succeeding 1832 were living in times perhaps as perilous as the history of England has to show, — amidst a romance of peril as striking, when fully understood, as any of the times of the Plantagenets and the Stuarts. If this statement appears extravagant, it must be because the greater number of quiet Englishmen have not yet contemplated the history of their own time as they would that of another. This is certainly the case with the greater number of us; while some few regard the story of this chapter with a sort of incredulity — a dread of giving way to romance — which disturbs their judgment, and obstructs their perception of the wonder and interest of the too unquestionable tale. It was not that the facts were any secret. They were published in newspapers, in reviews, and in the reports of parliamentary committees and debates. It was that few, in the midst of the pressing business of the time, saw the full significance, or felt the full enormity, of the case; and the few who did, used a reserve and prudence so uncommon in them as to indicate the depth and force of their own impressions.

It was a time of revolutionary conspiracies; conspiracies to

which those of the Castlereagh and Sidmouth times were trifles ; conspiracies at both extremes of society, — one under the steps of the throne, the other under the shadow of the workhouse. Of them we shall speak presently ; but we must first show the reflex agitation of both as apparent in a remarkable movement in an intermediate portion of society.

It is unnecessary to present again the conduct of the majority of the Peers during the reform struggle. It is, and Conduct of the Peers. ever will be, fresh in men's minds ; the disgrace of the bishops above all ; and, next, the insolence and rancor of the least enlightened of the lay Peers. From year to year, they protracted the provocation they gave to the people at large, by obstructing and damaging measures of improvement which they could not wholly get rid of. They did this with a rashness which appeared unaccountable, till revelations were made that showed how the most violent of the obstructive Peers had reckoned on political changes which should give them justification for the past, and their own way for the future. We have seen how they came to yield the point of parliamentary reform ; but it was not known at the time how confidently they expected soon to repeal the Reform Bill. We have seen how they repeatedly extinguished the Irish-Church bills sent up by large majorities of the Commons ; how fifteen bishops assembled at Lambeth to concert measures for intimidating the Ministry ; and how the Primate began his agitation in the Upper House before the measure was introduced there. We have seen how materially they injured the Municipal-Reform Bill, in its principles as well as its details ; and how they went up in a crowd to address the sovereign in opposition to a liberal, though extremely small, educational measure, and received their due rebuke. If it were necessary to follow their action, step by step, through the legislation of the time, we should see that these were but a small part of the obstructions opposed by the majority of the Lords to necessary or desirable reforms.

It was not to be expected that the nation would bear this. The question, "What must be done with the Lords ?" so familiar in 1830–32, was not dropped ; and a succession of replies to this Peerage reform. question was proffered in the other House. Various members there proposed a reform of the House of Lords as a fitting sequel to the reform of their own ; and the seriousness with which the question was discussed during the years 1835–37 is rather startling to the reader of the present day, till he remembers the then recent abolition of the hereditary peerage in France, the triumphant reform of our own Lower House, and the insolent attitude of defiance assumed at the time by the Kenyons, Rodens, Wynfords, and Newcastles, who were secretly

expecting a speedy restoration of their domination in the State. The most favorable circumstance, perhaps, for them was, that Mr. O'Connell early pledged himself to procure a reform of the House of Lords. On Irish questions, Mr. O'Connell was supremely to be feared by his opponents, but not on questions which must be agitated elsewhere than in Ireland. At the close of the session of 1835, he went on what he called "a mission" to the north of England and Scotland, to rouse the people to require an elective peerage, — the election of a Peer, for a term of years, by every 200,000 electors; which would yield a House of 130 Peers for the 170 then sitting. He was received and feasted, with acclamations, by large numbers of people at Manchester, Newcastle, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. Yet no visible effect was produced, — at least, none to the injury of the cause of the Peers; for O'Connell's oratory, so powerful in Ireland, seemed to astonish or amuse, rather than persuade, his English and Scotch audiences. The following seems a fair specimen of his methods of incitement; and no Englishman or Scotchman will wonder that it did not assist the subversion of so time-hallowed an institution as the British House of Peers. On meeting the Edinburgh trades, he said: "We achieved but one good measure this last session; but that was not our fault, for the 170 tyrants of the country prevented us from achieving more.¹ Ancient Athens was degraded for submitting to thirty tyrants; Modern Athens will never allow 170 tyrants to rule over her.² . . . It was stated in one of the clubs, that at one time a dog had bitten the bishop; whereupon, a noble lord, who was present, said, 'I will lay any wager that the bishop began the quarrel.' Now, really the House of Lords began the quarrel with me. They may treat me as a mad dog if they please: I won't fight them; but I will treat them as the Quaker treated the dog which had attacked him. 'Heaven forbid,' said he, 'that I should do thee the slightest injury! I am a man of peace, and I will not hurt thee;' but, when the dog went away, he cried out, 'Mad dog! mad dog!' and all people set upon him. Now, that is my remedy with the House of Lords. I am more honest than the Quaker was; for the dog that attacked me is really mad. Bills were rejected in the House of Lords simply because Daniel O'Connell supported them; and I do say, that, if I had any twelve men on a jury on a question of lunacy, I would put it to such jury to say if such men were not confirmed madmen. So you perceive the dog is really mad, — and accordingly I have started on this mission to rouse the public mind to the necessity of reforming the House of Lords; and I have had 50,000 cheering me at Manchester, and 100,000 cheering me in Newcastle; and I heard one

¹ Annual Register, 1835, p. 369.

² Spectator, 1835, p. 916.

simultaneous cry, 'Down with the mad dogs, and up with common sense!' The same cry has resounded through Auld Reekie. The Calton Hill and Arthur's Seat re-echoed with the sound; and all Scotland has expressed the same determination to use every legitimate effort to remove the House of Lords. Though the Commons are with us, yet the House of Lords are against us; and they have determined that they will not concede a portion of freedom which they can possibly keep back. Sir Robert Peel, the greatest humbug that ever lived, and as full of political and religious cant as any man that ever canted in this canting world, — feeling himself quite safe on his own dunghill, says that *we* want but one chamber, one House of Radical Reformers. He knew that, in saying this, he was saying what was not true. We know too well the advantage of double deliberation not to support two Houses: but they must be subject to popular control; they must be the servants, not the masters, of the people." It was true that Auld Reekie caught up the sound, and that the Calton Hill and Arthur's Seat re-echoed with the cry. O'Connell had a magnificent reception by the Edinburgh trades and the United Irishmen; and the Calton Hill was covered with a dense mass of the well-dressed inhabitants of the city. "The reception of O'Connell by the immense assembly," we are told, "combined solemnity with enthusiasm." But the enthusiasm melted away, and the cry died out, without producing any effect on the constitution of the Lords' House. O'Connell could not lead a political reform anywhere but in Ireland; even where, as now, he began with every advantage.

Much more effectual was the action within the walls of the House of Commons, on the ground of the petitions sent up during the mutilation of the Municipal Bill by the Peers. On the 2d of September, Mr. Roebuck declared his intention of moving for leave to bring forward, in the next session, a Bill for the removal of the veto possessed by the House of Lords; substituting for this veto a suspensive power which should cause the reconsideration of any measure which the Peers should object to, but which suspensive power should not intercept the royal assent to any Bill after its second passage through the Commons.¹ Mr. Hume gave notice, the same night, that he should move, early in the next session, for a select committee to inquire into the constitution and condition of the House of Peers; who the Peers were, how qualified, and how they discharged their duties. Some amusement was caused by Mr. Hume's courageous repudiation of all poetical feeling, and all antiquarian associations, when he complained of "the farce" of the forms of conference between the Lords and Commons, when the Peers were seated and covered,

Attacks on
the House
of Lords.

¹ Hansard, xxx. p. 1268.

and the Commons standing and bareheaded, — “to exchange two bits of paper,” as Mr. Hume said. He saw nothing of the old days which his words called up before the mind’s eye of those who heard him, — the days when the peers were like princes, each with a little army at his call; and when the unwarlike burgess-representatives really did half worship or tremble before the valorous nobles of the land. It might be time, as Mr. Hume thought, to give up forms which had ceased to contain any truth; but Mr. Hume’s way of setting about it amused some people, and shocked others, with the sense that he did not know what he was about. But, before that day twelvemonths, Mr. Hume stood higher than any other man in the House or in the kingdom, in connection with the people’s quarrel with the House of Lords. By him, the Lords had, by that time, been humbled, awed, brought to their senses; and this by no vulgar clamor or extreme devices, but by industry and sagacity and courage applied in ascertaining and revealing facts which placed the most insolent of the Peers at the mercy of the Crown and the Commons. Of this matter, however, the members were not generally aware on this 2d of September, 1835; and a third notice of motion was added to those of Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Hume. Mr. Cuthbert Rippon gave notice, that next session he should ask leave to bring in a Bill to relieve the archbishops and bishops from their attendance in the House of Lords.

After the prorogation, the various political parties and leaders were watched with anxiety by the enlightened Liberals of the country, who saw that something must be done to remove the obstructive quality of the Peers, if the legislation of the country was to proceed at all, in pursuance of the purposes of the Reform Bill. The ministers were watched. Some of them used strong language on public occasions respecting the recent conduct of the obstructive Peers; and on Mr. O’Connell’s return to Ireland, after his “mission” was concluded, he was invited to dine with the Lord-lieutenant, — an incident which was regarded by the Tory Peers as a declaration of war on the part of the Viceroy. On the other hand, Lord John Russell made a public and emphatic avowal, that he was opposed to all further organic change; and the government newspapers declared, now without comment, and now with expressions of regret, that no views of any important modification of the structure of the Upper House were at present held by the Administration.¹ Few of any party doubted that Lord John Russell would learn to see the necessity of reform, by some means or other. There was a strong party in Parliament, and a large body of the nation, occupied in thinking of what should be done; and, on the whole, the conclusion, in the

¹ Globe, Oct. 7, 1835.

autumn of 1835, was that the subject was ripe for discussion, but that it must take more than one session to bring the matter to a practical issue. There were few who imagined how prodigiously the inflation of the insolent section of the Peers would have subsided, without danger of organic change, before the close of the next session.

On the 26th of April, 1836, Mr. Rippon made his promised motion to release the spiritual Peers from their attendance in Parliament. It was opposed by Lord John Russell, on the plea that it would lead to no practical result. On a division, 53 members voted with Mr. Rippon, and 180 against him.¹ In May, Mr. O'Connell gave notice of his intention to introduce his proposal to make the Upper House elective. Some laughed, — laughed in loud shouts; and others were very grave, thinking the matter too serious in the existing state of affairs, for laughter. One member, Mr. G. Price, wished to move that the notice should be expunged from the notice-book; but here Lord John Russell interposed in defence of the right of the Commons to entertain any proposition for what any member might consider a reform in any branch of the Legislature, even if it should extend to regulating the succession of the throne; in which he was clearly supported by historical precedent. Mr. Price withdrew his motion. The question, however, was not brought on; the events of the close of the session rendering any further humiliation of the obstructive Peers unnecessary. Sir W. Molesworth, who knew more of the singular history than almost any one, quietly dropped the motion for peerage reform of which he had given notice for 1837. But the Bishops were not yet to be left in peace. Mr. Charles Lushington moved, on the 16th of February, for the exclusion of the spiritual Peers from the Upper House, and was ably supported by Mr. Charles Buller, whose opinion was that the Bishops had abundant employment elsewhere; that they were seldom prepared to enlighten legislation on subjects which lay peculiarly within their province; and that they were invariably found voting with the Minister who gave them their sees.² Lord John Russell opposed the motion with the question, Where, if Parliament once began to modify the constitution of the country, would they stop? — How far would they go? — a question which Mr. Buller declared to be easily answered. They would go only as far as the door of the House of Lords, to show the Bishops out, and then leave them to go where they pleased.³ He, who had a great respect for the Bishops, thought them most honorably seated in their own dioceses, where they had as much business to do as would quite engross them. On this occasion, 92 members voted with the reforming mover, and 197 against him.

¹ Hansard, xxxiii. p. 320.

² Hansard, xxxvi. p. 609.

³ Hansard, xxxvi. p. 625.

One more attack was made on the functions of the Peers in May of the same session, when Mr. Duncombe proposed the abolition of the Lords' privilege of voting by proxy. The resolution was thus worded: "That the practice of any deliberative assembly deciding by proxy upon the rejection or adoption of legislative enactments, is so incompatible with every principle of justice and reason, that its continuance is daily becoming a source of serious and well-founded complaint among all classes of His Majesty's subjects."¹ It was shown that when the practice of voting by proxy began, in the time of Edward I., the proxies were men of lower rank, sent as messengers by the nobles who could not attend in person; and that it was not till the reign of Henry VIII. that the abuse crept in of allowing one peer to represent others. When, in the time of Charles I., the Duke of Buckingham held fourteen proxies, the evil was so evident as to cause an order to be passed that no Peer should henceforth hold more than two proxies. In modern days, when legislation has become immediately interesting and important to the great mass of the people, the practice of proxy-voting has become more indefensible than ever; and yet the safeguard was withdrawn of the King's license being a condition of a Peer's absence. Lord Stanley and Sir R. Peel met the argument by likening proxy-voting to the custom of pairing in the Commons. The analogy was shown not to be a true one; and, if it had been, the obvious reply would have been,—"Then abolish the custom of pairing, except on individual occasions." The majority of 48 against the motion was formed by the official Whigs and their dependents, so that the state of the question appeared by no means desperate. But, again, events were occurring which deferred the controversy to a future time.

Such was the course of the mildest of the three "revolutionary" movements of the period,—that in which the sober and educated classes of the community reflected the far more serious agitation which was going forward on either hand.

It was at this period that men who went among the working-classes of the great towns first began to speak of Chartism. Chartism, Chartists, and the Charter. Some in higher ranks now and then asked what the words meant; but too many in every station—especially, too many in the ranks of government—did not look closely into it, but dismissed the matter as a thing low and disagreeable, and sure to come to nothing from its extreme foolishness. It is the year 1838 before we find the word "Chartism" in the "Annual Register;" yet, long before that, Chartism had become the chief object in life to a not inconsiderable portion of the English nation. And when it came to

¹ Hansard, xxxviii. p. 760.

be a word in the index of the "Annual Register," government and their friends regarded it as a "topic of the day." When the great national petition, bound with iron hoops, was carried, like a coffin, by four men from its wagon into the House of Commons, ministers and their friends looked upon the show as upon an incident of that vulgar excitement which poor Radicals like or need, as the tippler likes or needs his dram. Reckoning on the fickleness of the multitude, they pronounced that Chartism would soon be extinct; and then, that it was extinct. Their Attorney-general, Sir John Campbell, in a sort of declaratory ministerial speech at a public breakfast at Edinburgh, declared Chartism to be "extinct," shortly before the Monmouth rebellion. The chief law-officer of the government gloried in the supremacy of loyalty, law, and order, immediately before the breaking out of a long-planned rebellion, of which every possible warning had been given, in the form of preceding riots! The newspapers agreed with the government, and government took its information from the newspapers; and thus, from year to year, was Chartism declared to be extinct, while we, in the present day, have the amplest evidence that it is as much alive as ever. And, as it is living so long after the announcement that it was dead, so was it living long before it was declared to be born. When government and London were at last obliged to take heed to it, they found that their tares were ready for harvest, and that long ago the enemy had been sowing them while they slept: — while they slept, literally as well as metaphorically; for the gatherings and speechifyings had been by torchlight on the northern moors and the Welsh hillsides. There were stirrings certainly as early as the date before us, — the years 1835–36.

And what were these stirrings? What was it all about? The difficulty of understanding and telling the story is from its comprehending so vast a variety of things and persons. Those who have not looked into Chartism think that it means one thing, — a revolution. Some who talk as if they assumed to understand it, explain that Chartism is of two kinds, — physical-force Chartism and moral-force Chartism, — as if this were not merely an intimation of two ways of pursuing an object yet undescribed! Those who look deeper, — who go out upon the moors by torchlight, who talk with a suffering brother under the hedge or beside the loom; who listen to the groups outside the union workhouse, or in the public-house among the Durham coal-pits, will long feel bewildered as to what Chartism is; and will conclude at last that it is another name for popular discontent, — a comprehensive general term under which are included all protests against social suffering. And thus it was at the date before us, whether or not it be so now.

There were men among the working-classes, sound-headed and sound-hearted, wanting nothing but a wider social knowledge and experience to make them fit and safe guides of their order, — some few of them not deficient even in these, — who saw that the Reform Bill was, if not a failure in itself, a failure in regard to the popular expectation from it. If it was all that its framers meant it to be, they must give a supplement. A vast proportion of the people, — the very part of the nation whose representation was most important to the welfare of the State, — were not represented at all. As a sage expressed the matter for them not long afterwards:¹ “A reformed Parliament, one would think, should inquire into popular discontents *before* they get the length of pikes and torches! For what end at all are men, honorable members and reform members, sent to St. Stephen’s, with clamor and effort; kept talking, struggling, motioning, and counter-motioning? The condition of the great body of people in a country is the condition of the country itself. This, you would say, is a truism in all times, — a truism rather pressing to get recognized as a truth now, and be acted upon, in these times. Yet read Hansard’s debates, or the morning papers, if you have nothing to do! The old grand question, whether A is to be in office or B, with the innumerable subsidiary questions growing out of that, courting paragraphs and suffrages for a blessed solution of that, — Canada question, Irish-appropriation question, West-India question, Queen’s-bedchamber question; game-laws, usury-laws; African blacks, hill coolies, Smithfield cattle, and dog-carts, — all manner of questions and subjects, except simply this, the alpha and omega of all! Surely honorable members ought to speak of the condition-of-England question too, — Radical members, above all; friends of the people; chosen with effort, by the people, to interpret and articulate the dumb, deep want of the people! To a remote observer they seem oblivious of their duty. Are they not there, by trade, mission, and express appointment of themselves and others, to speak for the good of the British nation? Whatsoever great British interest can the least speak for itself, for that beyond all they are called to speak. They are either speakers for that great dumb toiling class which cannot speak, or they are nothing that one can well specify. Alas, the remote observer knows not the nature of Parliaments; how Parliaments, extant there for the British nation’s sake, find that they are extant withal for their own sake; how Parliaments travel so naturally in their deep-rutted routine, commonplace worn into ruts axle-deep, from which only strength, insight, and courageous generous exertion can lift any Parliament or vehicle; how in Parliament, reformed or unreformed, there

¹ Carlyle’s Chartism, p. 4.

may chance to be a strong man, an original, clear-sighted, great-hearted, patient, and valiant man, or to be none such." The men we have spoken of—soon confounded in the group of Chartist leaders—felt and knew such things as Carlyle has here set down for them; felt that Parliament had not done what was needed,—that the people's story had not been told there,—that the "strong man" had not yet appeared there; and their conclusion was, that they might try and get the duty of Parliament better done. They might possibly expect too much from the means they proposed,—extension of the suffrage, shortening of Parliaments, protected voting, and establishing a control over representatives, and opening a wider field of choice of such, by paying the expenses of their function: they might possibly expect too much from these aims; but it is a libel upon the best class of Chartist leaders to say that they expected from these aims all that they wanted. These men were the heartiest and truest advocates in the country of universal education. They saw more clearly than anybody else, and lamented more deeply, the miseries arising from popular ignorance. They mourned over the murders and vitriol-throwing of the operatives who were enslaved by mercenary delegates; they mourned over the fate of the followers of "Messiah Thom;" they mourned over the nightly drillings on the heath, with pike and bludgeon; they mourned over the nature of the opposition to the new poor-law, when crowds of thousands of men, who could never be called together again to be disabused, were assured by orators, whom they took for educated men, that under the new poor-law every poor man's fourth child was strangled, and that none but the rich were henceforth to have more than three children. They did more than mourn: they spent their hard earnings, their spare hours, their sleeping hours, their health, their repose, to promote the education which the State did not give. By wonderful efforts, they established schools, institutes, lecture and reading rooms, and circulated knowledge among their class in every way they could think of. Such were some of the body soon to be called Chartists,—as soon as their political ideas had resolved themselves into the form of a charter which the people might demand. These men were all Radical Reformers. They saw little to choose between the Tories and the Whigs. As we again find their ideas expressed for them: "Why all this struggle for the *name* of a Reform Ministry? Let the Tories be Ministry, if they will; let at least some living reality be Ministry! A rearing horse that will only run backward,—he is not the horse one would choose to travel on; yet of all conceivable horses the worst is the dead horse. Mounted on a rearing horse, you may back him, spur him, check him, make a little way even backwards; but, seated

astride of your dead horse, what chance is there for you in the chapter of possibilities?"¹ These men wanted a strong, steady-going progression; and they would have therefore neither the pomp and prancings of Toryism, nor the incapacity of Whiggism. They were Radical Reformers.

Another set were Tories, — Tory agitators who went about to raise the people against the new poor-law, and divert ^{Tory} them from the aim of repealing the corn-laws. These ^{Chartists.} men — guilty or stupid, according as they were or were not really the reverends and esquires that the mob believed them to be — were the orators on the moors by torchlight. These were the men who taught in those thronged meetings that the poor-law was a system of wholesale murder, and that no one could blame a poor man who carried a knife in his bosom for the workhouse official who should attempt to part him from his wife. These were the men who represented the whole class of manufacturers as devils who caused children to be tortured in factories for their own amusement; and too often the declamation ended with a hint that the hearers evidently knew how to get torches, and that factories would burn. These were the men who warned their hearers against a repeal of the corn-laws, because these laws were the last restraint on the power of the mill-owners. These rabid and ranting Tories were another class of Chartists.

There were thousands who knew little about themselves, except that they were very hungry and miserable. A ^{Hungering} landed proprietor now and then, here and there, said ^{Chartists.} in the House pretty things about the sun of Christ's natal-day gilding the humble thatch of the laborer at the same moment with the spire of the church and the windows of the mansion, — intending to convey that the joyousness of Christmas was shared by all ranks: while, the very next Christmas, in the very county, the very parish of these orators, the laborers were shivering without fire, — cowering under a corner of the decaying thatch, which let in snow and rain upon their straw litters, — and hungering over the scantiest morsels of dry bread; one neighbor in four or eight, perhaps, having a slice of bacon, and a fire whereon to cook it. Such parishes as these furnished a contingent to the Chartist force, — haggard wretches, ready to be called by any political name which might serve as a ticket to better cheer in life than they had found.

Largest of all was the number of those who ought not to have felt themselves under any immediate pressure of wrong ^{Faction} at all. There were many thousands of factory opera- ^{Chartists.} tives, of Welsh, Durham, and Cumberland colliers, and others, who were far from poor, if only they had been wise enough to

¹ Carlyle's Chartism, p. 93.

see their condition as it was. But they were not wise enough ; and that they were not, was *their* social wrong. Of these, great numbers had a larger annual income than very many clergymen, half-pay officers, educators, and fundholders, who are called gentlemen ; but they did not know how to regard and manage their own case : they reckoned their income by the week instead of by the year, and spent it within the week ; had nothing to reply, when asked, in a time of prosperity, why they who worked so hard had not mansions and parks like people who did nothing ; and, in a pinching time, when hungry and idle at once, with hungry children crying in their cold homes, were too ready to believe, as desired, that every other man's fire and food and cheerfulness were so much out of their pockets. By no act of the State could these men have been blessed with higher wages : but, if the State would have educated them, they might have found themselves abundantly blessed in their present gains ; they might have sat, in their school-days, on the same bench with the curate and the seaman and the schoolmaster and the tradesman whom they were now envying and hating, and might now have been content, like them, with the position which was " neither poverty nor riches." But the State had left them ignorant ; and here they were, drilling on a hillside, and plotting to burn, slay, and overthrow. They had an indistinct, but fixed idea, that there was unbounded wealth everywhere for every body, if only there were no tyrants to intercept it ; and there can be no wonder in any sympathizing mind and heart, that a man in a desolate home, without occupation, and suffering under that peculiar state of brain caused by insufficiency of food, becomes a torch-bearing Chartist, or any thing else, however clear it may be that the money he had earned might, if wisely managed, have made him a ten-pound householder exercising the suffrage, and a capitalist giving education to his children.

It was but lately that the King's speech had intimated the prosperity of commerce and manufactures, while agriculture was grievously depressed.¹ But already there was some sense abroad of evil to come. Trade slackened and became irregular, and the most sagacious men of business began to apprehend that a new term of commercial distress was setting in. They were right ; only their apprehensions did not compass any thing like the truth. It is well that they did not ; for a mere glimpse of the horrors of the seven years to come would have been too much for the courage of any but the boldest of the enterprising classes of British merchants and manufacturers. Though they saw little, they soon began to feel uneasy, with an uneasiness far transcending any reason that they could give for it. As yet, wages were

¹ Hansard, xxvi. p. 65.

scarcely lowered, though profits were sensibly sinking; but the employed assumed a new air to their employers, in many a town and factory district in England, — a sauciness that seemed to say they felt themselves injured, and were not going to put up with it long. This was the temper which was fast growing into the Chartism of 1839.

But that seven years' distress brought out an opposite class of facts of the most cheering nature, as we shall see under their date. We shall see, hereafter, something of the marvellous and sublime patience of the working-classes under a trial which might well be thought too sore for human endurance. This patience was in precise proportion, and in the clearest connection, with the knowledge by this time gained by the working-class most concerned, — that there is no such thing as an inexhaustible fund of wealth, and that no tyrants were standing between them and comfort. The patient class knew that they had had their share, — as shares are at present naturally apportioned; they could and did live for a long series of months on the savings they had made; and, when at last they were left bare, they knew that the richest capitalists were sinking too. Of this class many hundreds were Chartists; but they did not carry pikes and torches, to avenge discontents of their own. The people's charter was then in existence; and their aim was to carry that. It would give them, as they believed, a Parliament which would understand their case, and cure many evils under which they were suffering. And some had visions of an association of small capitalists, who might defy the fickleness of fortune; and some dreamed of buying a field and being safe and in harbor there, through some wonderful skill and simple arrangements of Chartist leaders. But these were not the revolutionary Chartists who were at work, burrowing in the foundations of society at the date before us. The better class came in later, — after the promulgation of the Charter, — as, indeed, did many of the worst; but, in 1835 and 1836, the boring was begun, and the train was laying, which produced, for one result among many, the explosion at Monmouth in 1839.

The revolutionary movement referred to as occurring at the other end of society was one which it would be scarcely possible to credit now, but for the body of ^{Orangeism.} documentary evidence which leaves no shadow of doubt on any of the principal features of the conspiracy. The whole affair appears so unsuited to our own time, and the condition of our monarchy, — so like a plunge back into a former century, — that all the superiority of documentary evidence of which we have the advantage, is needed to make the story credible to quiet people who do not dream of treason-plots and civil war in England in our day.

A month before Sir R. Peel's resignation in the spring of 1835, the Liberal party throughout the country were surprised by the appearance of a sudden fit of captiousness and pertinacity in some of their representatives, in teasing the ministers about the reception of addresses from Orange societies to the King.¹ From the temper of the time in the House, and especially among the opposition, any captiousness must have been great indeed which could have struck everybody as remarkable. Member after member rose to cross-examine the ministers — who, themselves, could have hardly understood the proceeding — as to whether the addresses purported to be from Orange societies; whether the King could or ought to receive addresses from associations of declared illegality; whether the replies given had really, as the newspapers said, been avowedly gracious; whether the graciousness had been connected with a recognition of the parties as Orangemen; and finally, and very seriously, whether Mr. Goulburn, as Minister of the Crown, considered an Orange lodge to be legal or illegal, and whether he was prepared to justify the presentation of an address from such a society to the sovereign. The ministers were probably surprised and perplexed, beginning to see that this was a matter of high importance, but hardly understanding why or how; for no one of them rose for a considerable time. After the dead silence in which the question had been listened to, and the rising of the Minister looked for, vociferous cheers from the Opposition filled the House when he did not rise. At length, Mr. Goulburn made his answer.² The reply to the addresses was intended as an acknowledgment of their receipt, and not as any recognition of the legality of the party-name by which the signers might designate themselves. Cheering no less loud followed the reply. Perhaps no cheers given in that House — not even those which signalized the passage of the Reform Bill — ever carried such anxiety and pain to the hearts of certain of the Tory Peers, and especially of the highest prince of the blood, the eldest of the King's brothers. He and some others of the Peers could very well understand what all this might mean, while it was a singular mystery to the country at large.

The country at large knew little about Orange societies, except that the Orangemen in Ireland were proud of their loyalty, and made conspicuous processions on great Protestant occasions, and were ever and anon coming to blows with the Catholics. Orangeism belonged exclusively to Ireland, in the general mind. People generally would have stared to hear that Orangeism was in England, Scotland, and the colonies; and that it constituted an army of itself, in the midst of the military forces of the empire.

¹ Hansard, xxvi. pp. 536-554.

² Spectator, 1835, p. 219.

Orangeism was exclusively Irish at first, — in 1795, when it was first heard of. Before that time, the Protestants who patrolled the country, to prevent the seizure of arms by the Catholics in the night, in preparation for their insurrection, bore the name of “Peep-o’-day Boys.”¹ The Catholics, who organized themselves against these patrolling bands, called themselves “Defenders,” and soon extended the term to include the defence of “the united nations of France and Ireland.” As soon as the aim of a union with France was avowed, and a descent of the French upon the coasts of Ireland was expected, the Protestants began to improve and extend their organization, in the hope of preserving the union with England. They would have taken the title of “Defenders,” but that their adversaries already bore it. They reverted to the period of the bringing in of a Protestant sovereign over the head of the Catholic James II., and called themselves Orangemen. Such, at least, is the traditionary account in the district where Orangeism sprang up. The Diamond — a little hamlet about five miles from Armagh, where a conflict took place in 1795, which is called the battle of the Diamond — is assigned as the birthplace of Orangeism. A few yeomen and farmers joined for mutual defence and the assertion of British rights, after the battle of the Diamond; and this was the first Orange lodge. The gentry saw what this might grow to, and encouraged the formation of lodges, and the promulgation of rules. As Presbyterians abounded in that part of the country, they formed the main element of the societies; and it is said that the religious observances of the Orange lodges, which afterwards degenerated into a subject of scandal when Dissenters were no longer admitted, were introduced originally by them. The Orangemen of Ireland were the deadly foes of the “United Irishmen,” and the most effective check upon them; and they have even claimed the credit of having preserved Ireland to England.

Perhaps it was through the connection of some English noblemen with Irish property that Orange institutions were introduced into England. Lodges were at first held in England under Irish warrants; but, in 1808, a lodge was founded in Manchester, and warrants were issued for the holding of lodges under the English authority.² On the death of the Grand-master at Manchester, the lodge was removed to London, in 1821; and the meetings were held at the house of Lord Kenyon, who was deputy-grand-master. The Duke of York was to have been Grand-master; but he found that the law-officers of the Crown considered the institution an illegal one. The rules were modified so as to meet the terms of the law. The Act which prohibited political societies in Ireland

¹ Hall's Ireland, ii. p. 462.

² London Review, No. iv. p. 490.

from 1825 to 1828, appeared to dissolve Orangeism there for the time: but lodges were held under English warrants; and, in 1828, the whole organization sprang up, as vigorous as ever, on the expiration of the Act. At this time, the entire institution, in Great Britain and Ireland, came under the direction of the Duke of Cumberland, as Grand-master. The critical part of the history, as regards England, lies between the years 1828 and 1836. In 1829, when the Duke of York was gone, and the King had given the royal assent to the Emancipation Act, the Orangemen seem to have lost their senses, as they certainly lost their loyalty. The proofs of this which came out in 1835, when the Orangemen on our side the Irish Channel numbered 140,000, — 40,000 of whom were in London, — bewildered the nation with amazement.

In 1828, on the accession of the Duke of Cumberland to the throne of Orangeism, he sent forth, under a commission of the great seal, — “given under my seal, at St. James’s, this 13th day of August, 1828. Ernest, G.M.”¹ — a certain person, chosen “from a knowledge of his experience, and a confidence in his integrity,” the “trustworthy, well-beloved, and right-worshipful brother, Lieutenant-Colonel Fairman.” This person, thus chosen and confided in by the Duke of Cumberland, had a plenary authority, declared in the commission under the great seal of the order, to establish Orangeism wherever he could, and by whatever means he thought proper. He went to Dublin, in order to bring the Irish and the English lodges into one perfect system of secret signs and pass-words; and he made two extensive tours, in England and Scotland, to visit and establish lodges in all the large towns and populous neighborhoods where he believed he could bring the people to “rally round the throne and the Church,” — to use the language of the party and the time. The nation at large saw no particular occasion for rallying round the throne, as it seemed to them that the House of Brunswick never was safer. But the Orange leaders, apparently driven frantic by the reforms of the time, were of a different opinion. They actually got it into their heads, at the time when the Duke of Wellington was carrying the Catholic Emancipation Act, and George IV. was evidently sinking, that the Duke of Wellington himself meant to seize the Crown. Men laughed when they first heard this, and men will always laugh whenever they hear it; but that such were the apprehensions of the Orange leaders is shown by correspondence in Colonel Fairman’s handwriting, which was brought before the parliamentary committee of 1835.² The following is an extract

¹ Report of Committee on Orange Societies, September, 1835.

² London Review, v. p. 202.

from a letter evidently designed for the Grand-master Ernest himself, and written during the last illness of George IV.: "Should an indisposition, which has agitated the whole country for a fortnight, take a favorable turn, — should the Almighty in his mercy give ear unto the supplications that to his heavenly throne are offered up daily, to prolong the existence of one deservedly dear to the nation at large, — a divulgement I have expressed a willingness to furnish would be deprived of no small portion of its value. Even in this case, an event, for the consummation of which, in common with all good subjects, I obtest the Deity, it might be as well Your Royal Highness should be put in possession of the rash design in embryo, the better to enable you to devise measures for its frustration; at any rate, you would not then be taken by surprise, as the nation was last year, but might have an opportunity of rallying your forces and of organizing your plans for the defeat of such machinations as might be hostile to your paramount claims. Hence, should the experiment be made, and its expediency be established, Your Royal Highness would be in a situation to contend for the exercise, in your own person, of that office at which the wild ambition of another may prompt him to aspire." Who this "other" was is plainly expressed in two subsequent letters. It was Wellington! — the devoted Wellington, who perilled his reputation for consistency, and what his party call political honor, over and over again, rather than "desert his sovereign." Wellington lived to have this said of him by a man claiming to be a colonel in his own "perfect machine" of an army. In a letter from Fairman to Sir James Cockburn, in which he gives a most imposing account of the numbers and discipline of the Orange forces in Ireland and Great Britain, he speaks of grovelling worms who dare to vie with the omnipotence of Heaven; and of one among them he writes thus: "One, moreover, of whom it might ill become me to speak but in terms of reverence, has nevertheless been weak enough to ape the coarseness of a Cromwell, thus recalling the recollection to what would have been far better left in oblivion.¹ His seizure of the diadem, with his planting it upon his brow, was a precocious sort of self-inauguration." This seems a subject for fun, — for a caricature of the day, — so admirably is the charge in opposition to all the Duke of Wellington's tendencies; but there were some things in connection with this matter too serious to be laughed at. At the first hint of treason, men were roused to indignation on behalf of the good-natured King William, of whom it had been in contemplation to dispose so easily; and much more strongly did their affections spring to guard from insult and injury the fatherless

¹ London Review, v. 204.

young Princess whose rights were thus dealt with by that trusty and well-beloved brother Fairman, whom the Duke of Cumberland sent forth as his representative. On this letter being published, people began to understand the strange proceedings, and the violence of the debate about a regency, after the accession of William IV. And, on this letter being published, people began to remember how, from one occasion to another, rumors of the insanity of King William came floating abroad from the recesses of Toryism, till exploded by contact with free air and daylight. The letter is dated April 6, 1830,—during the last illness of George IV.; and it is addressed to the editor of the “Morning Herald:”¹—

“DEAR SIR,—From those who may be supposed to have opportunities of knowing ‘the secrets of the castle,’ the King is stated to be by no manner in so alarming a state as many folks would have it imagined. His Majesty is likewise said to dictate the bulletins of his own state of health. Some whisperings have also gone abroad, that, in the event of the demise of the Crown, a regency would probably be established, for reasons which occasioned the removal of the next in succession from the office of high-admiral. That a maritime government might not prove consonant to the views of a military chieftain of the most unbounded ambition, may admit of easy belief; and as the second heir-presumptive is not alone a female, but a minor, in addition to the argument which might be applied to the present, that, in the ordinary course of nature, it was not to be expected that his reign could be of long duration, in these disjointed times it is by no means unlikely a vicarious form of government may be attempted. The effort would be a bold one; but, after the measures we have seen, what new violations should surprise us? Besides, the popular plea of economy and expedience might be urged as the pretext, while aggrandizement and usurpation might be the latent sole motive. It would only be necessary to make out a plausible case, which, from the facts on record, there could be no difficulty in doing, to the satisfaction of a pliable and obsequious set of ministers, as also to the success of such an experiment.—Most truly yours,
W. B. F.”

There is nothing to wonder at now in the pertinacity with which the Opposition questioned the Peel Ministry about Orange addresses. Mr. Hume had got hold of these letters of 1830–31; and the members who cheered so loudly on the perplexity of the ministers were aware how the loyal Orangemen had listened to suggestions for making the Duke of Cumberland King, to pre-

¹ London Review, v. 203.

vent the usurpation of the Crown by the Duke of Wellington, — for expecting that William IV. would be superseded on an allegation of insanity, and the Princess Victoria because she was a woman, and probably still a minor. If the Orangemen, with all their importance of rank, wealth, and numbers, — with their array of British Peers, and their army of 140,000 men, avowedly ready for action, — could have shown that they did not listen to such suggestions, and that Colonel Fairman was a crack-brained adventurer, with whose wild notions they had no concern, they would assuredly have done so. But it was impossible: the proof was too strong the other way. The letters cited above were written in 1830–31; and a long array of correspondence shows that the trusted and beloved William Blennerhassett Fairman lost no ground with the heads of the party by his speculations. Some of the most offensive suggestions were set forth in “a series of essays,” written at the request of a noble Lord, for that noble Lord’s information,¹ — that noble Lord being Lord Kenyon; and these essays were handed over to the Duke of Cumberland, who kept them by him. In December, 1831, and in January, 1832, Colonel Fairman had long and confidential conversations with the Duke of Cumberland at Kew; and there were more such interviews in February.² On the 19th of the next April, Colonel Fairman was unanimously elected to the most important office in the society, — that of Deputy-grand-secretary; the present Duke of Buckingham being Secretary. Colonel Fairman was nominated by the Duke of Cumberland, seconded by Lord Kenyon, and supported by the Duke of Gordon.³ In June, Colonel Fairman went forth on his mission among the lodges, furnished by the Duke of Cumberland with powers so extensive as to render it a serious and difficult matter to draw up his commission.

It is under this date that Lord Londonderry appears on the scene. Before leaving London on this mission, Colonel Fairman learned from the lips of the Duke of Cumberland, as he declared, that he had written to Lord Londonderry on Orange affairs; and Colonel Fairman therefore wrote with more explicitness, he says, than he should otherwise have done.⁴ The subject is establishing Orange clubs among the pitmen on the estates of the Marquis; and his Lordship’s agent and Colonel Fairman had already been consulting about it. Considering the “Popish Cabinet and democratical Ministry” with which the country was oppressed, Colonel Fairman thought fit to suggest in this letter: “By a rapid augmentation of our physical force, we might be able to assume a boldness of attitude which should command the

¹ London Review, v. p. 205: Letter B.

³ p. 187.

² p. 208: Letter 12.

⁴ p. 208: Letter 12.

respect of our Jacobinical rulers. . . . If we prove not too strong for such a government as the present is, such a government will soon prove too strong for us : some arbitrary step would be taken in this case, for the suspension of our meetings. Hence the necessity for our laying aside that non-resistance, that passive obedience, which has hitherto been religiously enforced, to our own discomfiture." He further relates how he was reproached by Lord Longford, in a long conversation, the day before, for the tameness of the British Orangemen, while the Irish were resolved to resist all attempts to put them down. In a short letter, a few days afterwards, he says he writes to supply an omission, — he had forgotten to say that the Orange leaders had the military with them : " We have the military with us, as far as they are at liberty to avow their principles and sentiments ; but, since the lamented death of the Duke of York, every impediment has been thrown in the way of their holding a lodge."¹ It will be remembered that the Duke of York withdrew from his intended position of Grand-master on being assured of the illegality of the association. We have the answer of the Marquis of Londonderry to the above letters ; the purport of which is, that he had consulted Lord Kenyon, who hoped to convince the Duke of Cumberland that " the moment had not arrived," owing to the refractory state of the pitmen, and the Whig temper of the county ; but, says the last sentence, " I will lose no opportunity of embracing any opening that may arise."² Lord Londonderry admitted in the House of Lords all the facts of this correspondence ; only explaining that the Duke of Cumberland's wishes were made known to him through Lord Kenyon, and not by interview or letter. In the same month of August in which his commission bears date, there is a letter of Fairman's to the Duke of Gordon, in answer to an invitation to Gordon Castle, in which he anticipates that " we shall be assuming, I think, such an attitude of boldness as will strike the foe with awe ; but we inculcate the doctrine of passive obedience and of non-resistance too religiously by far."³ He has letters, he says, written " in the highest spirits," from Lords Kenyon and Londonderry, Longford and Cole ; and he declares his expectation of an approaching crisis. It was after all this that he still went to Kew, and " was closeted three hours" with His Royal Highness. It was after these things — namely, on October 24 of the same year — that Lord Wynford wrote to Colonel Fairman in praise of the Duke of Cumberland, and that " the Tories have not been sufficiently grateful to him ;" winding up with the following words : " As you are so obliging in your last letter as to ask my advice as to whether you should pursue the course you have so ably begun, I can only

¹ p. 209: Letter 13.² p. 209: Letter 14.³ p. 210: Letter 15.

say, that you must exercise your discretion as to the company in which you make such appeals as that which I have seen reported.¹ When you meet only sure Tories, you may well make them feel what they owe to one who is the constant, unflinching champion of the party; and who, by his steady course, has brought on himself all the obloquy that a base, malignant faction can invent." Colonel Fairman quoted Lord Wynford and Lord Kenyon to each other, as consulted by him, "on the propriety of my continuing to introduce the Duke's name in the prominent shape I had previously done."² "If he [the Duke] would but make a tour into these parts," continues the colonel, "for which I have prepared the way, he would be idolized." By "these parts" he means Doncaster, whose maudlin loyalty, — such loyalty as he saw, — the tears of the gentlemen, which made him "play the woman," — the enthusiasm of the "noble dames," whom he compliments with the title of "the blue belles of Yorkshire," is described in a letter too absurd to have been penned by the confidential agent of princes and lords on the gravest political matters.³ It was a grave affair to the private interests of some of the brethren, if we may judge by a letter of Lord Kenyon's to Colonel Fairman, in January, 1833.⁴ "The good cause," writes his lordship, "is worth all the help that man can give it; but our only trust must be in God. In the last two years and a half, I shall have spent, I suspect, in its behalf nearer 20,000*l.* than 10,000*l.*" We find the Orange Peers continuing their confidence to Colonel Fairman up to the time of the demand of a Parliamentary committee.⁵ Lord Roden writes to him about "our cause." Lord Kenyon confides to him his views of the comparative influence of some Scotch Peers, and observes, "It is a great pity, too, that the amiable Duke of Buccleuch does not see the immense importance of his sanctioning such a cause as the Orange cause."⁶ Lord Thomond writes to him about his subscription in England and Ireland.⁷ Lord Wynford reports to him in April, 1834, a private consultation between the Duke of Cumberland, Lord Kenyon, and himself, about the purchase of a newspaper, and declares it highly probable that something would soon be done about it by the Carlton Club.⁸ Another "sound paper, as well as the 'Morning Post,' " was wanted; and the "Age" had previously been thought of; its "scurrility" and "looseness of principle" being admitted, but Lord Kenyon not admitting, "as some do, that the private characters of public men ought to be considered sacred against all attack."⁹ This newspaper, the "Age," was at that precise date occupying itself,

¹ p. 213: Letter 23.² p. 215: Letter 30.³ p. 216: Letter 31.⁴ p. 216: Letter 28.⁵ p. 220: Letter 45.⁶ p. 220: Letter 47.⁷ p. 221: Letter 48.⁸ p. 221: Letter 49.⁹ p. 207: Letter 8a.

week by week, with exhibiting the personal infirmities and peculiarities of the Whig ministers, — the baldness, the lameness, the nervous twitchings, the shortsightedness, and so on. Lord Kenyon seems to have considered these things as belonging to private character, — “not to be considered sacred against all attack.” But the subject of the moralities of the Orange leaders is too large a one to be entered upon here. The gleanings which might be made from the evidence of the report would afford material for a curious inquiry into the theory of Christianity held by men whose boast — by the mouth of Lord Kenyon — was, “Ours is the cause of all friends of Christianity;”¹ and whose most Christian hope was of “the arrival of a day of reckoning,” when certain “hell-hounds” would “be called on to pay the full penalty of their cold-blooded tergiversations.”² So late as July 27, 1834, we find the Duke of Gordon confiding to Colonel Fairman his gladness “that the unprincipled ministers remain to do more mischief; as yet we are not ready for a change.”³ It is clear that there could be no attempt on the part of the Orange leaders to repudiate Colonel Fairman as their confidential agent; and when all this correspondence, and much more, was laid before the parliamentary committee, it became a matter of serious consideration how to proceed.

There was much more behind. It was important to know what was “the prominent shape” that the agent gave to the name of the Duke of Cumberland, in his assemblages of Orangemen, throughout his tour. It was charged upon Fairman, by an Orangeman of the name of Haywood, that he had sounded his hearers at Sheffield and elsewhere on their willingness to support

Plot. the Duke of Cumberland as their Sovereign, if, as was probable, William IV. should be deposed for his assent to the Reform Bill.⁴ Colonel Fairman denied this; but his word did not go for much with those who had read his correspondence, nor with any who knew that it had been proved in a court of justice that he had given a false address to get rid of a troublesome creditor.⁵

Again, it was discovered, that, of the 381 lodges existing in Great Britain, 30 were in the army; and that lodges

Lodges. existed among the troops at Bermuda, Gibraltar, Malta, Corfu, New South Wales, Van Diemen’s Land, and our

The army. North-American colonies. The Duke of Cumberland and Lord Kenyon positively asserted that they were ignorant of the fact of the existence of an Orange organization at all in the army. But in the correspondence we find Lord Kenyon writing to the colonel: “His Royal Highness promises

¹ p. 211: Letter 17.

² p. 207: Letter 7.

³ p. 221: Letter 50.

⁴ London Review, iv. p. 482 (note).

⁵ London Review, v. p. 187 (note).

being in England a fortnight before Parliament assembles. To him, privately, you had better address yourself about your military proposition, which to me appears very judicious."¹ Again, "The statement you made to me before, and respecting which I have now before me particulars from Portsmouth, should be referred to His Royal Highness, as military matters of great delicacy."² At the same time, private intimation, I submit, should be made to the military correspondents, letting them know how highly we esteem them as brethren." Again, "If you hear any thing further from the military districts, let His Royal Highness know all particulars fit to be communicated."³ So much for Lord Kenyon's ignorance of Orangeism in the army! But there was, as regarded the Duke, more direct evidence in the records of the lodge-meetings at which he presided; and himself granted new warrants to soldiers present, some of which are actually entitled "military warrants."⁴ The military lodges were entered in the books, noticed by the circular-reports of the meetings where the Duke of Cumberland presided; and the laws and ordinances, containing provisions for attracting soldiers and sailors by a remission of the fees, are declared to have been inspected and approved by the Duke, and handed over to Lord Kenyon for final supervision. Thus it is not wonderful that the committee reported, "That they find it most difficult to reconcile statements in evidence before them, with ignorance of these proceedings on the part of Lord Kenyon, and by His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland."

Such was the dealing of these loyal leaders with the army. As for the Church, they had the Bishop of Salisbury for Lord Prelate and Grand Chaplain of the order; ^{The Church.} and there were twelve or thirteen Deputy-grand-chaplains, and clergymen as masters of lodges and managers of their affairs. Not a single minister of religion out of the Establishment belonged to the order in England. The religious observances, conducted by the clergymen, bore but too close a resemblance to the mummeries of the poor Dorsetshire laborers; as did the proceedings altogether, in their illegality. In one of the circulars, the clergy are invited to come in, and take appointments, with the notification that no salary was attached to office, but that it might lead to patronage.⁵ In one of these circulars, the position of the Church, in the eyes of ^{Actions of Orangemen.} Orangemen of the period, is described in language too indecent for quotation. As for the rest, the grand lodge declared itself possessed of "the facility of knowing the principles of every man in the country." The institution excluded Roman Catholics and

¹ p. 214: Letter 27.² p. 218: Letter 36.³ p. 219: Letter 40.⁴ No. iv. p. 498-500.⁵ p. 487.

Dissenters, and included the most violent and unscrupulous of the Peers; it numbered 140,000 actual members in Great Britain, and 175,000 in Ireland; it expelled members who voted for liberal candidates; it proposed the employment of physical force, within a proximate time, to overthrow the liberal institutions which had just been gained; it was beginning to interfere with the common duties and rights of men,—as when a lodge of pitmen in Scotland expelled a body of Catholics “who had before lived and worked with them in peace and harmony;”¹ and, at the latest date, it was found holding out threats to the half-pay of the army and navy, to draw them to itself in preference to other political unions.² “It is the bounden duty of such [pensioners and disbanded soldiers], in a crisis of danger like the present [February, 1835], to enlist under the banners of a loyal association, instead of repairing to factious unions, no less hostile to sound policy than to true religion, at the imminent risk of incurring a just forfeiture of their hard-earned remunerations, of which a scrupulous government would not hesitate to deprive them. Of this intelligible hint the half-pay of the army and navy might do well to profit, in a prospective sense.”

Such was the institution,—the great conspiracy against the national will and national interests,—the conspiracy against the rights of all, from the King on the throne to the humblest voter, or soldier, or sailor, or Dissenter, or Catholic,—which was discovered by the energy and diligence of Mr. Hume in 1835. Such, as has been related, was the information of which minds were full, on the opposition side of the House, when that scene of pertinacity was transacted which perplexed all who did not yet understand the case. The simple-minded King had been receiving, with studied graciousness, addresses from these illegal societies, in which the question of his deposition had certainly been agitated. The question was now, What should be done?

The seriousness of the question, and of the whole case, was relieved by the certainty, speedily obtained, that the institution, with its political objects, its signs and pass-words, and its oaths, was illegal. There was some reluctance, here and there, to admit the illegality; but the opinion of the most eminent lawyers soon settled the matter. It might be fortunate, too, that the seriousness of the case was relieved by the touches of the comic which we have encountered,—the Duke of Wellington, of all people, crowning himself with the diadem; and the Doncaster loyalists,—the “blue belles of Yorkshire” smiling, and their fathers and brothers weeping, over that hero of romance, the Duke of Cumberland; and the style, both of letters and circulars, which must

¹ No. iv. p. 497.

² p. 200.

come in among the comic incidents of the case. The extreme silliness of the conspirators — a fair set-off, as it appears to us, against the ignorance of the Dorsetshire laborers — was another fortunate alleviation of the seriousness of the case; though it is no light matter to see so great a number of men — some powerful through rank and wealth — playing the fool, and compelled virtually to petition to be thought fools, as the only alternative from the reputation of traitors. With all its nonsense, and looked at from any pinnacle of superiority, this was a very serious matter. How was it to be dealt with?

The first thing done was obtaining a committee of inquiry in the Commons, within three weeks after the scene of Committee of pertinacious questioning with which the revelations inquiry began.¹ Before the committee had reported, portions of the evidence were published in the newspapers; and several people, besides Mr. Hume, thought that no time was to be lost in exposing and annihilating the illegal practice of maintaining political societies in the army. Amidst many complaints of his proceeding, before the committee had reported, Mr. Hume moved eleven resolutions, on the 4th of August, declaratory of the Mr. Hume's facts of Orangeism, of its illegality in the army, accord- resolutions ing to the general orders issued by the Commander-in-chief, in 1822 and 1829; and ending with a proposal of an address to the King, calling his attention to the whole subject, and especially to the Duke of Cumberland's share in the illegal transactions complained of.² Mr. Hume's opponents alleged that the military warrants must have been misapplied without the knowledge of the chief officers of the association, whose signatures were given to blank warrants, in order to their being sent out in parcels of a hundred or two, in the confidence that they would be properly employed; and, also, they declared that Orangeism in the army was a purely defensive measure, against Ribbon societies, and other secret associations, whose suppression they required, if Orange lodges were put down. To this there could be no objection in any quarter. The last of Mr. Hume's resolutions was objected to as conveying, inevitably, more or less censure on the Duke of Cumberland, — a proceeding which could not be justified before the delivery of the committee's report and evidence. Lord John Russell, who had to act and speak for the government in the Lower House, went through this affair with eminent prudence, courage, and moderation. The Whig Administrations had been blamed by some parties in the House for supineness in permitting the pranks of the Orangemen for so long; and it was alleged that they had thought the organization too formidable to be meddled with, during a season of political transition. It might

¹ Hansard, xxvii. p. 135.

² Hansard, xxx. p. 58-79.

be so. Certainly, the prudence, quietness, and guarded moderation of Lord John Russell throughout the whole transaction conveyed an impression, that the affair was, in his view, one of extreme gravity, though he did not say so, but rather made as light of it as circumstances would permit.¹ He now moved that the debate should be adjourned to the 11th of August,—that is, for a week; giving a broad hint to the Duke of Cumberland to use the time in withdrawing himself from all connection with the Orange Association.

The Duke did not take the hint. He merely wrote and published a letter to the chairman of the committee, in which he denied having ever issued warrants to soldiers, or known of such being issued,—declared that he had declined sending out military warrants, on the ground of their violation of the general orders of 1822 and 1829,—and intimated that all warrants inconsistent with those orders should be annulled.² How the Duke's denial was regarded by the committee, we have already seen, in a sentence of their report. Lord J. Russell had shown his prudence in the debate of the 4th; now, on the 11th, he showed his courage.³ He declared his impression that the Duke had not done what the House had a right to expect from him. If the Duke had merely signed blank warrants, and his Orange brethren had betrayed his confidence in filling them up in a manner which he was known to disapprove, the least he could have done would be to withdraw himself at once, and in a conspicuous manner, from persons who had so deceived him; but the Duke appeared to have no intention of so withdrawing. Mr. Hume's last resolution was therefore agreed to, with the omission of the assertion at the end that the warrants were designed for the establishment of

Address to
the King.

Orange lodges in the army. On the 15th, the King's reply was read to the House. It promised the utmost vigilance and vigor in suppressing political societies in the army.⁴ On the 19th, the House was informed that Colonel Fairman had refused to produce to the committee a letter-book which he acknowledged to be in his possession, and which was essential to the purposes of the committee.⁵ He was called before the House, where he repeated his refusal; was advised by some of the Orange members to yield up the book; persisted in his refusal; and was admonished by the Speaker that he must obey the orders of the House. On the 20th, as it appeared that he was still contumacious, it was ordered that he should be committed to Newgate, for a breach of privilege; but

Colonel Fair-
man's con-
tumacy.

¹ Hansard, xxx. p. 100.

² Hansard, xxx. p. 304.

³ Hansard xxx. p. 677.

⁴ Annual Register, 1835, p. 332.

⁵ Hansard, xxx. p. 559.

by this time he had disappeared.¹ The book was really much wanted. It was known to contain replies to letters in the hands of the committee on the establishment of Orange lodges in certain regiments at Gibraltar and elsewhere, and must afford information on the proceedings of the Orange missionary, named Uccalli, who had complained of the difficulty of establishing Orange lodges among the troops in the Ionian Islands, from the vigilant resistance of Lord Nugent and the other authorities.² The committee earnestly desired to have the book; and it was moved that the House should order Colonel Fairman's papers to be searched. It was believed that the House had this power; but, considering the odium of exercising it, and the probability that where Colonel Fairman was secreted, there were all his important papers likewise, it was thought best not to issue the order.

Next, it was ascertained, by certain parties determined to carry this matter through, that the case of the Orange leaders was analogous to that of the Dorsetshire labor-^{Proposed prosecution.} ers. They had become liable under the same law; and it was now resolved, that, if evidence could be obtained, the Duke of Cumberland, Lord Kenyon, the Bishop of Salisbury, and others, and Colonel Fairman, should be brought to trial before the Central Criminal Court. The prosecutors got hold of Haywood, the Orangeman who had taken fright at Fairman's incitements to treason, had made them known, and was prosecuted for libel in consequence. It was clear to the committee that the evidence bore out Haywood's statements; and those who were about to prosecute the Orange leaders appointed counsel for Haywood's defence, — the counsel retained being Serjeant Wilde, Mr. Charles Austin, and Mr. Charles Buller.³ For the prosecution, the most eminent counsel were retained: the indictments were drawn, notwithstanding the difficulty of assigning the exact title of the Duke of Cumberland; the evidence was marshalled; the original letters were arranged; and all was prepared, when two events happened which rendered further proceedings unnecessary.

Poor Haywood died through apprehension. He felt himself the probable victim of the great association whose ^{Death of Haywood.} power he well knew, and whose wrath he had brought upon himself; and he was not yet aware of the powerful protection to be extended over him, when he broke a blood-vessel, through agitation of mind.⁴ It was then too late to save him; and he died a few days before the trial was to have come on. The other cause of delay was a request from Mr. Hume, that all

¹ Hansard, xxx. p. 777.

² Hansard, xxx. p. 676.

³ London Review, v. p. 188.

⁴ London Review, v. p. 184.

